The Methodist Pulpit

The Gospel Message

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W. H. B. Mason

The Gospel Message

Sermons and Pulpit Talks Delivered Extemporaneously on Special Occasions

By

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To My Wife

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I.

THE GOSPEL MESSAGE.

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor; He hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord."—LUKE IV, 18, 19.

DOWN yonder in Nazareth one Sabbath morning a Preacher sat down to teach. Unlike the Jewish priests around Him, He wore no turban about His head, no golden girdle about His waist; He waved no scepter in His hand. But He was so remarkable in His appearance, so genuinely dignified in His demeanor, so profoundly simple in His manner, so solar and translucent in His face, that He at once made His way to the public desk, unrolled the Book of sacred Scriptures, announced before His astonished hearers the words of my text, sat down, as was the custom, and immediately began to teach.

His text was in itself a sermon, and the sermon was but the enlargement of the text.

The reception which He received here in Nazareth was but prophetic of those ever-varying and changing scenes which characterized His entire ministry. The great congregation heard Him with intense interest, but with varying delight. One moment they assented to every word He said, the next moment they as heartily dissented. On the one hand, charmed with His gracious words, overwhelmed by the majesty of His personality, they would call Him King, the promised Messiah, the Hope of Israel. On the other hand, pricked to the heart by His pungent sayings, overcome by their narrow-minded prejudices, they would sneeringly ask, "Is not this the son of Joseph,—the carpenter's son?" Some were for Him, others were against Him. The skirmish begins, the battle rages, and the great congregation, with heavings in their breasts as the turbulent waves beat against the shore, rose to their feet, angrily seized Him and attempted to thrust Him out of the temple. Rejected by His own people, driven away from His own home, so poor that as He Himself tells it, "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay His head"—rejected by

His own people, driven away from His own home, yet, thank God, in the fullness of time, He shall come, the fairest among ten thousand, altogether lovely; His principles shall hold universal sway, His doctrines control in every heart, and the world will reach its highest point of civilization when the nations everywhere know Him and reverently bow before Him.

Now, who was this messenger, this Preacher? Whence came He? What was the source of His authority, what the secret of His power? In the first place He was God, very eternal, everlasting, Almighty God, the second Person in the adorable Trinity, the Creator of the visible universe about us. For somehow, my friends, the more I study this blessed Book, the more I am struck with the beauty of the thought that the privilege of creation was given to the Son in order that the world created by Him should by Him be redeemed. John tells us, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made." And John goes a step farther and in a sentence gives us a glimpse of that remarkable statement, so far beyond our compre-

hension, until I sometimes think we shall have to wait for the unfolding of the pearly gates before we shall fully understand it, namely, "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." So that in some strange and mysterious way down yonder in Nazareth on this epochal day of the world's history, God, the Almighty, the Everlasting, the Eternal, the second Person in the adorable Trinity, the Creator of the visible universe about us, was breaking unto the people of His own creation the bread of eternal life—Almighty, everlasting, eternal God.

In the second place, He was man, very eternal man. O, I love to think of my Savior as man. The idea of God is so far beyond my finite comprehension that like Israel I stand trembling in His presence, but when I think of my Savior as man, I feel assured that I can freely approach Him, and in my difficulties and trials, in my weaknesses and shortcomings, I have before me at once the highest example of what a man can be and what a man can do for his fellow men—very eternal man. And now if some one in the audience, becoming a little inquisitive, passes the question to the platform and says, "Sir, how is it that just a moment ago you said He was God, and now with equal earnestness, you affirm He was man. How is it pos-

sible that He could have been God and man at one and the same time?"

To this query I answer without hesitation, I do not know. It is a somewhat into the depth of which my finite mind can not penetrate, a mystery the intricacies of which my finite mind can not comprehend; but while I can not comprehend it, and therefore can not explain it, yet I believe it; in a certain sense, thank God, I know it. And now if my auditor, becoming a little more inquisitive, sends the word again to the platform and says, "Sir, why is it that upon such an important matter as the divinity of our Lord, standing as it must at the very threshold of our Christian theology, the very basis of its life and thought,—why is it that upon such an important matter you would have me substitute my faith for my reason?" To this query I reply, with as little hesitation as before, that faith is the beginning of all human wisdom and understanding. That wherever I turn to study man in all the departments of his varied life, faith in material matters, as well as faith in the Book, is the beginning of all wisdom and understanding. It is so in the home. Look at that little child. It is about to make its first step, and its mother standing opposite it with open arms says, only as a

mother can say, "Come on, darling," and the little one steps out, not upon its own experience, for really it has had no experience, but rather upon its faith in its mother. It is so in the school-room. And that boy who is going to be worth anything to himself, or his country, accepts on his faith in his teacher the statement that five times five are twenty-five, until for himself his own mind is able to fully comprehend that fact. It is so everywhere. Yonder is a flower blooming in the garden, with its face all painted with the variegated colors of the rainbow. But is there any artist in all this audience that can tell me how it was done? Can you tell me how the Great Artist, with such wonderful accuracy, painted the face of that flower, so that you can not tell where the brush began nor where it ended? Can you? And shall the truth be denied because it can not always be understood? Look at that flower again, it lives, it breathes, it grows, the botanist tells me; and it does. But have you ever seen life, have you ever felt it, have you ever measured it, do you comprehend it? Can you explain it? Can you put your finger on that flower at the very point where life begins, and taking away your hand, put it again at the very point where life ends? I know the physician puts his hand on my pulse

and tells me that life grows stronger, or that life grows weaker, but after all, does he know life? Does he even pretend to know life? Does he not simply point along some of the by-paths where life makes its manifestation? Nay, nay, my friends, we do not know life, we have never measured it, we can not comprehend it, and therefore, we can not explain it, but we believe in it, we hold tenaciously to it. And while I can not explain, simply because I can not fully comprehend, how it was possible for Him to have been God and man at the same time, yet I do know, when my Father out of the bosom of His love looked out on this world of sin and sorrow, and saw the depth of wickedness into which man had plunged himself; He took His only begotten Son, wrapped Him in a little piece of bleeding clay, stood Him between Himself and the sinner, put in Him all of His love, His mercy, yea, His express image, and sent Him out into the world that it might be a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation—that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. Very God and very man.

Having studied somewhat briefly the messenger, let us study now a little more closely the message. Hear it.

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because

He hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor; He hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord."

How wonderful! How comprehensive! It goes into all the depth of the woes and wails of mankind. It goes as far as sin ever dared to go, and presents the Gospel as the only balm in Gilead that can cure a sin sick soul. How wonderful! Again I repeat it, how comprehensive! It is at once a challenge to everything that was before it, and to everything that should come after it. It is a challenge to all systems of theology, to all systems of philosophy, to all systems of ethics and morals, to all systems of literature, that the Gospel is the only remedy that will save the world from its sins and bring back man into reconciliation to God.

The East, you will remember, is the mother of all the world's great religious systems. Indeed, of the world's great philisophical systems as well. We of the West are proud of our civilization, and well we may be, but we must remember that the cradle of the world's great religious systems was the East. All truth has not come to us by revelation alone, and

I believe that outside of revelation, as well as within revelation, there have been honest men, earnest seekers after the truth; and in the East from time immemorial men outside of revelation have been hungering and thirsting for the truth, and as a result have founded great religious systems, and who would dare say that they are without some truth? Indeed, I believe that when we shall understand our own great system of religious truth more fully we shall be willing to recognize the little truth which here and there we may find in other systems, and upon the recognition of this truth, as Paul did before the Greeks at Athens, secure an entry in the hearts and confidence of the people, and preach to them Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

Let us now take a running comparison of some of these great religious systems of the East. We must not attempt anything like an exhaustive study, but only such as will bring before us in a word the main ideas of these great religious systems, so that for ourselves we may come to see the width, and breadth, and magnitude of this Gospel message announced by Jesus of Nazareth in the beginning of His ministry.

Five hundred years before this message was an-

nounced at Nazareth, a religious teacher had risen in the East. His name was Sakyamuni, more commonly called Buddha. After much thought and study, Buddha said: "I will tell you what is the matter with mankind, I will solve the problem of human living." Said he: "We are living too closely associated together, so that instead of studying ourselves we are giving our time to the study of our neighbor. Let us get away to the wilderness, to ourselves, where after study and contemplation and renunciation of the world, we may reach the point where we can best serve mankind." And this man, the prince of his people, believing in the gospel which he preached, renounced the throne, took off his royal gems, divorced his wife, deserted his only child, and hied himself away to the jungles of India, where, after years, he reached the height of his system—Nirvana—a condition in which there is neither life nor death, a sort of dreamy absorption in the spirit of the universe. And as a result of his doctrines, his followers have given us a great system of religious teachings. I do not find fault with Buddha. I can do better than that. I present a Gospel which will cover man's entire case. Buddha found some truth. His ethics were lofty; his compassion boundless; his self-denial heroic. But after Nir-

vana what? Buddha himself was in doubt. I present you this Gospel message this morning, which solves life's problems here and hereafter. For He who hath brought us salvation through this message hath power not only to heal the broken-hearted, to break the bands of the captives, and bring joy and peace to the human heart, but He hath power and dominion over the grave itself, and passing through the dark valley of the shadow of death, left the light burning so that every fearful, trembling soul might read, "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in Me, though he were dead yet shall he live again." Very well, Buddha, you went a little distance, you got a little truth, but your great system of religious teaching has been rather a burden than a help to your people.

Six hundred years before this message was announced at Nazareth, another religious teacher had risen in the East. His name was Confucius, the wise man of China. I never laugh at the Chinaman when he passes along the street with his peculiar dress, for in the first place, I remind myself that nine times out of ten those who laugh at others deserve more to be laughed at than those at whom they laugh—and again, I remember that two thousand years before Europe saw the light of day,

China was ablaze with a civilization many centuries old, and her astronomers were in their day the strongest students of the heavens above us, who accurately followed Mars, Arcturus, Pleiades, and Orion, in their sweep around the celestial heavens; and who can tell but that 1900 years ago these same Chinamen were the wise men, who, seeing the star in the East, wended their way across the deserts to Herod and said, "We have seen His star in the East and have come to worship him?" Who knows?

Confucius said, "I will tell you what is the trouble with mankind, there is too much insubordination; in common parlance, too much big-headedness. There are too many men who want to lead, who ought to be glad for a chance to follow. Too many men who want to be at the head of the nation's life, who ought to be thankful for a chance in the rear. Too many men who want to govern who are entirely unfitted for their work, either by education or experience. Let us have order, government, obedience. Let the best man, fitted by experience and education, stand at the head of the nation's life, and the next best man in the next best place, and the next best man in the next best place, and so on ad infinitum until you have every man in the place for which both by experience and edu-

cation, he is fitted to occupy. Let us have obedience. Let the young man bow in obedience to the old man, and the young woman bow in obedience to the old woman." And be it said to the credit of China to-day that in a certain way there is more obedience of children to their parents in what we call heathen China than in Christian America. Very well, Confucius, you went a good distance. Obedience to man is a great thing and has done much for the world, but you did not go far enough. If you had only made obedience to man basal upon obedience to God, then you would have had a foundation broad enough not only for China to stand upon, but for all the world. Your people are more burdened to-day than ever, and seeing no light are still in the region and shadow of death.

Twelve hundred years before this message was announced in Nazareth, another religious system had arisen in the East. Brahmanism said: "I will tell you what is the matter with mankind. I will tell you how to solve the problem of life and living. Sin inheres in the flesh, virtue in the intellect. Therefore, put your foot on your meaner self, your appetites, your passions. Debase the flesh, exalt the intellect. Educate, educate,"

said Brahmanism, "educate, and we shall have the remedy for the solution of the world's moral problems." Very well, Brahma, you went a good distance, but you did not go far enough. Education is a good thing, but you forget that the education of the head minus the education of the heart, gives a man an opportunity to become a dangerous citizen of the community; and your educated Brahman, instead of showing his superiority by his willingness and ability to stoop down and help the poor, and uplift the fallen, prides himself on merely claiming superiority, and if perchance he should touch a man of lower caste than himself, he rushes to his home, washes his clothing, bathes his body; for forsooth, says he, "I have been corrupted by touching that man,"—a system of caste, mean, wicked, foolish, intense, worse than the prejudiced system of America, and every one knows that is bad enough. Very well, Brahma, you went a good distance, but you did not go far enough. There is such a thing as evolution it is true, but you can not evolve man out of his sins. You can not by education take out the evil imbedded in his nature. The Gospel points out the only way—"Ye must be born again."

Thirteen hundred years before this message

was announced in Nazareth, another religious teacher had risen in the East. His name was Zoroaster. And Zoroaster in the sacred books of the Zend-Avesta said, "When Sosiosh comes we shall have a man so thoroughly akin to God on the one hand, and so thoroughly akin to man on the other, that with one hand he will take hold of God, and the other hand take hold of man, and will bring God and man together." And the only possible interpretation we are told that can be given to this idea of Sosiosh in the teachings of Zoroaster is that it means the Messiah. So that thirteen hundred years before this message was announced, a man outside of revelation, feeling in the dark, exclaimed: "When the Messiah comes we shall have a man so thoroughly akin to God on the one hand, and to man on the other, that he shall bring God and man together." Thank God, the Messiah has truly come. He walks up and down the aisles of this church this morning, places His hand tenderly upon you and upon me, and says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father except by Me." Thank God, the Messiah has come, and this message of the kingdom is being preached throughout the world; and as a result men have been released from the chains of sin and death and their

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baneful results, and a freedom that is genuine and true has come to the world, and the acceptable year of the Lord is truly at hand.

Now, having studied somewhat this message, let us in conclusion note the results of the message. In other words, what has this Gospel message done for the world? What has Christianity done for mankind? Viewed from a human standpoint, the ministry of the Lord Jesus was a stupendous failure. Here in Nazareth, in preaching his first sermon, the senseless mob choked Him down—and the mob is as senseless now as then—and He barely escaped with His life, and this incident was characteristic of His entire ministry. Out there on the desert, when He fed the five thousand with the loaves and fishes, they gathered around Him and enthusiastically proposed to crown Him King. But in a few moments, when their physical appetites had been surfeited, the same people who wanted to make Him king, called Him Beelzebub, the prince of devils. Yonder as He rides into Jerusalem for the last time, the people from the city go out to meet him, and the people from the country follow after Him, and as He ascends some hill, they salute Him and exclaim, "Hosanna, hosanna, blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord." The

people from the city cry out, "Hosanna," and the people from the country cry out "Hosanna." Voice echoes voice, and when their voices give out, and in this way they can no longer express the desires of their hearts, frenzied with enthusiasm, they pluck the palm leaves from either side of the path, take off their garments and silken robes, and make a velvety road upon which in great triumph He rides into the city of Jerusalem. But now He stands before Pilate. A few friends only are about Him. Somehow the great shouting multitude with their hosannas have changed. Even the disciples, who pledged Him eternal allegiance, stand afar off, and Peter, who declared that though all forsake Him he would not, is just now denying that he had ever seen Him, in the presence of a little Galilean maid. And the people, the great hosts who met Him from the city, and followed Him from the country, who just a little while ago cried out "Hosanna, hosanna," now with grim visaged faces cry out, "Crucify Him, crucify Him." And now I see them bind Him, and the crown of ugly thorns is placed upon His brow, and that face, made pale and wan by hours of waiting and anxiety, is now tinted all over with His own blood. Behold the man! And they scourge Him, they scourge Him, until the muscles

of His back stand out like so many purple whip-cords, and they put the cross, the heavy cross, upon His shoulder, and they drive Him up the hill of Calvary. And when worn, and weary, and tired, He falls under the load, they call Simon of Cyrene, a dusky man from the sands of Africa, and he puts his brawny shoulder under the cross and helps the Son of man up the rugged hill. And they nail Him to the tree, and as if to degrade Him even in His death, they place upon either side of Him a thief, and they rail at Him and abuse Him, and the condemned men (more is the pity) join the crowd in abusing Him. What a spectacle! Hear the jeers, the hisses, the howls of that motley crowd! Look into the face of that Jewish high priest as he exults over his ill-won victory, and laughs at his tortured victim! See that Roman centurion, touched by the awfulness of the hour, yet defiantly carrying out the judgment of his people! But amid it all, as a prophecy of a better day, I hear a sinner pray, "Lord, when Thou comest into Thy kingdom, remember me," and He stops dying long enough to say, "To-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise."

The scene now suddenly changes, and back to their homes go a company of the most disappointed men and women in all the world's history, scarcely

knowing less than they who had taken part in this great tragedy, of its real meaning, its world-wide significance. But on the third day in the morning, a voice from the grave inspires them—"I am He that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore." "Go ye into all the world and preach My Gospel to every creature." Poor men, how I pity them! They had never expected such a message as this. They were looking for a temporal kingdom. The idea of a world wide, spiritual kingdom had never entered their minds. And isn't it a sad spectacle to see them, these honest men on the mount yonder, still hoping that the kingdom for which they looked might come, and although feeling that something unusual was about to take place kept hope to the last? Is n't it a pitiable spectacle to see them there, hoping amid despair, when one of their number—maybe it was Peter—now partially restored to the apostolic band, said, "Master, wilt Thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" And He said unto them: "Tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem"—right here in the city of My humiliation and death; "tarry ye here until ye shall be endued with power from on high, and then ye shall become witnesses unto Me, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the utter-

most part of the earth." Thank God, Pentecost came and with it came power, and these poor, weak, untutored Galilean fishermen were suddenly and permanently transformed out of weakness into power, and everywhere they went preaching the Word. Sometimes on wings of flame, again on fiery chariots of persecution; everywhere they went preaching the Word, until within three hundred short years, Pilate was mocked while Rome acknowledged Jesus. And this glorious Gospel message has been going on, and on, and on, uplifting and saving men, breaking their bonds and chains, proclaiming the acceptable year of the Lord, and as a result, in nearly every corner of the globe, some one can sing with you and with me,

> "Praise God, from whom all blessings flow,
> Praise Him, all creatures here below."

What has Christianity done for the world? Much in every way. It has strengthened man physically, intellectually, morally. The little scarlet stream that ran down the hill of the cross has entered into the very life blood of all the race, and even man physically is all the stronger because of it, and Christianity in its all-pervading influence is seen and felt everywhere. It has strengthened

man's arm, and to-day he strikes a heavier blow. It has broadened his shoulders, and to-day he bears heavier burdens. It has touched his brain, and to-day he solves more difficult problems. It has purified his heart, and to-day he is more and more like God, his Father.

In the social realm of life it is the supreme, regenerating, uplifting power. For all these years it has been swinging the world's social pendulum from the side where might was right to the side where right is might. It has destroyed the power of the usurper, dethroned the tyrant, and placed upon the brow of individual man the crown of kingly authority. It has uplifted man, man of every race, of every clime, of every nationality, and has emphasized him as the greatest idea in the universe. It has unshackeled the slave, overturned the auction block, and started mankind everywhere to sing the morning song of the world's coming jubilee.

It has entered the home, the home despoiled by sin and ruined by Satan, and transformed it out of a harem into the most sacred spot in all the world. It has ennobled man, emancipated woman, honored motherhood, decked the brow of childhood with untold worth, and placed inestimable value upon human life and character.

All is not yet settled. Many problems built up by human conceit, and supported by human selfishness remain unsolved. But, my brethren, the solution is not so much on the side of God, as it is on the side of man. It is for you and for me, followers of our Lord and children of His kingdom, to make ourselves, by the aid of His Holy Spirit, earnest and genuine representatives of Him, whose Gospel we preach, and to whose doctrines we have subscribed. The unsolved equation, the unexplored remainder, in the solution of the world's moral problems, is the lack of a more thoroughly consecrated individual Christian life, built and sustained upon the eternal principles of the Gospel. Let this be done in your community and mine. Let the men and women who fail to read aright the message in the Book, read it unmistakably in your lives and in mine. Let the Church be in truth and in fact the bride of the Christ, holding aloft in her right hand this message of love and joy, and emphasizing in her very life its essence, its living embodiment. Let this be done and the fires on the altar will never go out, and men and women everywhere shall be asking the way of life and peace. Let this be done and the wounds and heartaches of mankind will permanently disappear. Let this be done and in-

stead of hate, arrogance, racial prejudice, we shall have love, forbearance, brotherly kindness. Let this be done and this world, with its sorrows and disappointments, its diseases and pains and death, will be transformed into a veritable Eden and earth become the vestibule of heaven.

PRAYER.

Father, we thank Thee for the message brought to us through Thy Son Jesus Christ, and we thank Thee that He Himself is the living embodiment of that message. He came to bring us peace, and deliverance, and salvation, and eternal life, and we have it; thank God, we have it. Now help us with renewed energy and overwhelming enthusiasm to carry it to others. Amen.

II.

NOT HONOR BUT SERVICE.

"But it shall not be so among you; but whosoever will be great among you, let Him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let Him be your servant."—MATT. XX, 26, 27.

THE introduction of Christianity into the thought and character of the world produced a revolution in the ethical and social relations of mankind. Its basis, its life, its spirit were divine; its aims, its purposes, its mission were humane; its essential characteristic was love; its necessary expression was service. Its followers, imitating the spirit of its Founder, were not to win greatness by the variable and whimsical devices of men, but rather through a life of unselfish devotion to the highest interest and development of the human race. Up to this time the highest ethical thought to which the world had advanced was that the great man should show his greatness by the exercise of authority and a show of power. But Christ Jesus brings a new

thought into the world among men. Instead of the exaltation of one's self at the expense of another, the arrogant and pretentious claims for preferment, the mad rush for place and power, Christianity sent out a new doctrine into the world, which in relation to the prevailing sentiment among men was highly contradictory and intensely antagonistic; namely, he that would be greatest among you, let him be the servant of all. Upon this new principle a new system was to be built, a new life established, and a new standard in relation to the usefulness and true greatness of mankind determined. Willingness to serve and obey, rather than ability to reign and rule, were now and forever to be the true tests of genuine manhood and womanhood.

The visible, tangible, living expression of this new doctrine was the Master Himself. He was then as He is now—its source, its essence, its living embodiment. And it is here, my young friends, in the presence of our Christ, our High Priest, bearing our burdens, and touched with our infirmities, it is here in His personality as a man that we find our greatest hope and highest expectation, that we may be like Him. For He came down here among us, not simply in the form and likeness of a man, but in every respect a real man, susceptible to life's

cares and sorrows, liable to its temptations and trials, exposed to its difficulties and dangers, and yet ever bearing upon His great bosom of love the burdens and tears, the joys and sorrows of every human soul, ever manifesting in His daily ministrations a spirit of meekness and kindness to the poor, the sorrowing and needy, reserved and unassuming—all that we might have in our relations toward one another, in our preparation for usefulness and in our struggles toward perfection—the unselfish example of the Christ ideal of life, and the help and strength which He gives us in attaining to it.

This spirit of the Master, manifested at all times and under all circumstances in His service of love and labor, was both unique in itself and a positive rebuke to the narrow-minded selfishness about Him. Even His disciples, who were themselves to become the exponents of this new life both in precept and example, had not themselves at this time, fully understood the breadth and width and world-wide comprehensiveness of His mission. When they saw the multitude—the multitude, poor, ignorant, demoralized—the multitude discouraged, distressed, perplexed—the multitude hungering and thirsting for something better, His disciples would send them

away, but the Master, who came to seek and to save the lost, and who was never above His business, looked upon them with compassion and healed their sick. Note also that the manner and simplicity of His service was as radically distinct from the method of others about Him as was the service itself. No spirit of braggadocio ever entered His heart, no hasty word of depreciation ever fell from His lips. Simple and sincere, utterly devoid of cant and affectation, it stood in marked contrast between Pharisaic pretensions on the one hand and worldly indifference on the other. Its source was in the Divine heart, its controlling influence duty, its inspiration love.

The overwhelming purpose of His life was to do good, and to this end He bent every nerve and conserved every energy. Indeed, my friends, this was the supreme controlling element of His entire life work among men, and in the accomplishment of His purpose, no difficulty could debar Him, no obstacle obstruct Him. Perhaps nowhere in all His ministry is His sincere and unselfish spirit more clearly manifest than in His utter disregard of the social and political customs of His day, when they stood between Him and the salvation and uplift of a human soul. To Him, a kind word, a loving deed,

a brotherly expression of sympathy to a crushed and bleeding heart, were of greater importance than any ancient rule or custom built up by human conceit, or supported by human selfishness, and in this He was truly sublime, for He not only discarded and disregarded the whims and conventionalities of society, rejected the honors and applause of men, bore our sorrows and was acquainted with our griefs, but He gave up Himself, He gave up heaven, He gave up the glory—and who has been able to define that glory?—He gave up the glory which He had with the Father before the world began. He voluntarily became poor, a poverty not relative, momentary, or assumed, but a poverty real, irrevocable, absolute, and by His submission to this humiliation, without murmur or complaint, reveals at once His matchless courage, His superb heroism.

To this blessed work, to this kind of service, my young friends, controlled and directed in this spirit, the Christ calls us. Calls us not to be masters but servants, and if masters, then verily servants. What then, I ask, with Jesus Christ as the interpreter, is the supreme end of life, the highest aim of education? Certainly it is not honor, for the experiences of mankind have shown

without question that he who goes out in quest of honor, merely for honor's sake, has always been disappointed and deservedly so. It is not even character, important as is character, save that the development of character is regarded as a means rather than an end. It is not even life or the enjoyment thereof. For again the Master says: "He that findeth his life shall lose it, and he that loseth his life for My sake, shall find it." What then, I ask with Jesus Christ as the interpreter, is the supreme end of life, the highest aim of education? It is service, unselfish, devoted service. Consequently your work in this institution, my young friends, has been to fit you—not how you may best acquire honor, but rather how you may be best fitted to serve, and your willingness and ability to serve without pretension and without affectation will be the truest indication that you have here received this highest training which subdues self and honors God.

In order to reach this point, one must study himself, know himself, and by the grace of God, be able to subdue himself. For after all this is the supreme problem of education, for this work of personal study and inspection, of subduing one's self, of getting rid of one's notions and ideas; in fact, of self-mastery, until in the end one grows out of him-

self and becomes in spite of himself bigger than himself and bigger than his prejudices, becomes akin to heaven and in the likeness of Christ. This, my friends, is your most important mission, and in proportion as you have been able by the grace of God to do this, in such proportion is your preparation effective in receiving the education which truly educates, that subdues self and honors God.

In such a work of unselfish devotion to others, the Master is Himself our greatest example. His great work was not only to serve those who needed Him, but those who needed Him most, and if you will but take time to study the history of the world's great men and great women, you will find that the secret of their greatness was not honor, but service; not self, but Christ. This is your high ideal, the Christ ideal, to the attainment of which, in the magnificent work of preparing yourselves for a life of service and usefulness, the Master Himself calls you. If we are truly His, we must be like Him. And remember that the absolute and final test of our loyalty to Him is not our claims upon His love, our place in His Church, our enthusiasm for His cause, or the preparation which we have received for His work, but our willingness to conform our lives to his.

This work of service brings with it, as it must necessarily do, large responsibilities and great honor, for in calling us to be workmen with Him, He has conferred upon us the highest and greatest honor of serving with Him here, of suffering with Him here, and finally entering with Him into His kingdom on the day of his ultimate triumph and exalted glory. And remember that in this struggle, out of the old into the new, that in this struggle out of self into Christ, it is here in this moral sphere, on this moral battlefield where your greatest difficulties will come, your greatest battles will be fought, and where, if you are faithful to the heavenly vision, your greatest honors will be won. For to be a man, to be a woman—a real man, a real woman, genuine and true; first to know one's self, and second to have the courage and strength to correct one's self; to forget one's self while absorbed in the service of others; to stand up for the right when the right is in the minority; to breast the current of a debased and corrupt public sentiment; to be big enough to help those who would hinder you; magnanimous enough to love those that would hate you, to serve the humblest and the poorest; to keep one's self, heart, mind, and body pure amid inviting temptations—ah, these are the tests

to which you will be subjected, these are the victories which you are to win, and to the attainment of this high ideal, I repeat it, the Master calls you.

This is your work, this is your mission, and no such mission with such a field, ripe and ready to harvest, with the multitudes all about you, hungering, suffering, dying, calling to you—to you who have received this preparation, calling to you for help and inspiration and example—no company of young men and women in all the world's history are called to such thrones of service, as kings, and queens, and priests unto God and unto Christ. And into this field, with this spirit of unselfish devotion, with yourself thoroughly mastered, seeking service not honor,—into this field of ripened harvest, where Christ Himself has thrust the sickle, with such a Leader, I bid you in God's name enter, and work, and serve, and in due time all the honor you deserve and more will come to you.

There is in the text every suggestion that you are not to seek your own place in this scheme of service. Certainly you are not to seek for the best place. Go anywhere and everywhere, and let the motive of your service be, not the place where you can secure honor, but the place where you can be useful. I think there is no incident in all New Tes-

tament history that is more beautiful, and at the same time rebukes our self-conceit, than the service which the Master instituted Himself by washing His disciples' feet. This was the work that was usually given to the servant of the house, to wash the feet of their master's guests, when as they came in from a dusty journey they put off their sandals at the door; but the Master, in order to teach them the lesson which is emphasized here in the text, made of Himself a servant that He might show them the better way.

I wonder that some artist has not immortalized himself by painting the Christ, with His loins girded about Him, under the very shadow of the cross, washing His disciples' feet. A few years ago, when I was in Europe, I saw in the Cathedral at Antwerp that masterpiece of Rubens, "The Descent from the Cross," and I can well remember as we sat down in front of the painting that we almost sprang to our feet as the curtain went up and a gust of wind from one of the cathedral windows moved the canvas. Unconsciously we almost sprang to our feet, for the scene was so real and the artist had done his work so well that we thought that Christ might fall from the arms of those who were taking Him from the cross, and we wanted to help else that

sacred form might fall to the ground. I saw there also Leonardo da Vinci's head of the Christ. I was very much disappointed at first. The painting was on a little piece of marble—yellow, it seemed to me, not from its natural color but from its age—not wider than eighteen inches one way and possibly twelve inches the other. Turning to our guide I said: "I have often read of this masterpiece of the great Italian painter, and while I do not presume to be sufficiently versed in art to be a critic, yet I am disappointed and do not see anything particularly great about this painting." "Come this way," said he, and our company followed, and standing there, as we looked upon that pale face painted here and there with His own blood, which came from the wounds which the ugly thorns had made—as we looked upon that face, we did not dare walk another step, for it seemed that those lips were vocal with expression, and that they would speak to us. And so when I reached Paris we went into the Louvre and saw the great masterpieces of art, secular and religious, that Napoleon in his many conquests had brought from all the world. And then we went into the Luxemburg, where for years the masterpieces of the great painters of France as well as from all the world, purchased by the French

Government, find a place, and I was amazed to find that there was no great painting of Jesus washing His disciples' feet; and I wondered if it was not because the thought is so far beyond our conception of things that our selfishness has prevented such a production. I beseech you, therefore, do not turn away from the lowest, humblest place and the lowest, humblest work, but follow in the footsteps of the Master and be glad of any chance where you can serve and help. And let me remind you that those who go out to serve merely for honor's sake, have always been disappointed, and deservedly so.

The great Apostle, who more than any other of His contemporaries was faithful in service, gave us a great lesson when he said, "And now abideth faith, hope, charity—love—these three; but the greatest of these is love," and you will see, my young friends, that love in action is but another word for service. Therefore, the greatest thing that ought to inspire and challenge your work is not how you may best acquire honor, but how you may be best fitted to serve. Ambition for honor and fame has been the death of many a man. Take for instance, Aaron Burr in our own country, one of the most brilliant men that America ever pro-

duced. Aaron Burr, who came within one vote of being President of this great nation; Aaron Burr, who had such a strange, mysterious power over men that when he came to his trial for treason, the men who signed the charge against him excused themselves and skulked away when he put in an appearance. Yet this man with all his great ability and wonderful possibilities, simply because he lacked in moral strength and made honor rather than service the goal of his ambition, is to-day but a by-word and a hiss. My young friends, if you would be honored, then be willing to serve anywhere, for verily he who is the greatest among you should be the servant of all.

Your work here, then, has been not simply to master books, or to master trades, but pre-eminently by the grace of God to master yourselves. I do not hesitate to say here that in all our work of preparation for this work of usefulness, of service rather than honor, we are to emphasize moral culture rather than intellectual culture. I am sure that in this statement I will not be misunderstood, surrounded as I am by these walls, in the presence of this Faculty, and reminding myself that I have some official relation to this great educational plant, I would not if I could, and could not if I would, even

insinuate a word against intellectual culture. Indeed I am here to exalt it, but higher because more important than intellectual culture, I am here to exalt moral culture. For let us remember that intellectual culture has never been and never will be the criterion of the world's best civilization. Intellectual culture has never been and never will be a test of real manhood and womanhood. The civilization that is to be—the civilization for which the world yearns, and toward which I trust we are constantly tending,—is one not merely of the head but essentially of the heart. What then in the final analysis, I ask, is the chief work of education—in the North or in the South, among people who happen to be white as well as those who happen to be black, at Harvard or New Orleans, at Yale or Walden, at Princeton or here at Clark? What then, I ask, following the line of thought already indicated, is the chief aim of education? I answer in the first place, to raise men and women to the point of moral consciousness by which one by his work in the classroom, and the shop, reaches the place where he is able to indicate at least the moral quality of his motives. And let me here ask the young man or woman whose education has not brought him to the point of moral consciousness by which, as I have

just said, he is able to find out the moral qualities of his motives, to go into his room, lock the door, put the key in his pocket, blow out the light, and in the naked presence of God see Him face to face. The man who has not reached this point has scarcely begun his preparation, and his diploma, though secured at America's greatest university, is scarcely worth the paper upon which it is written. This is the first step that is absolutely necessary in preparing a man for usefulness and service. He must find out himself. He must know himself. He must know the moral quality of his motives. He must find where he is in God's great universe.

In the second place, I affirm the education that educates, that maketh for service rather than honor, must raise men and women to the point of moral heroism. When one has reached the point of moral consciousness, he is beginning to be a man, and is on the right road to usefulness. When one reaches the point of moral heroism, he is a man full grown, tall, symmetrical, and mature. He is all that earth and heaven can do for him. Moral heroism, what a height! Willingness to work, to suffer, if need be to die that others may live. Such heroism needs no compensation. It is full compensation itself, but if compensation is necessary, it will be given and that

readily by a thousand grateful hearts. For the world loves a hero, and the world does not stop to ask the color of a hero's face, the color of his hair, or his eyes, but loves the hero in spite of his nationality or his birth. Riding down that most beautiful boulevard, Champs Elysées, in the city of Paris, one day our omnibus stopped under the great arch built by Napoleon to commemorate his victories, and as we waited for an interpreter to take us out to the Palace of Versailles, I looked to my left and saw a street making right angles with our own, bearing the name of my old friend, Victor Hugo. In a moment of inspiration I jumped from my seat, ran down the street, cap in hand, crying out "Three cheers for Victor Hugo," and my friends at once exclaimed, "What is the matter with you, have you come over here to make us all ashamed of you and everybody else ashamed of us?" But the more they scolded, the more I cried, "Three cheers for Victor Hugo." And in a moment several enthusiastic Frenchmen joined me, and together we made the welkin ring as we cried out, "Three cheers for Victor Hugo." The moment I joined my company, and as with one voice, they asked me to explain, I said: "Ladies and gentlemen, I love Victor Hugo because he loves men, and unlike some authors he

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lifts up men, not to find fault with them but to exalt them. He discovers men not to find how much they lack, but how great is their capacity." Victor Hugo had the true secret of life, and every time he put pen to paper he was making heroes,—heroes who were willing to forget themselves in the work of helping others; heroes who could put malice under their feet and forgive men who had wronged them; heroes who learned how to serve in the humblest and lowest places, whose aim was not honor but service. Every time he put pen to paper, whether in the "History of a Crime," "Toilers of the Sea," "The Hunchback of Notre Dame," or "Les Miserables," he was making heroes, and he went down into the muck and mire and degradation of Parisian life and found him a peasant, the most ignorant and degraded, lifted him out of his surroundings, named him Jean Valjean, and made him big enough to go around helping those who were hindering him, magnanimous enough to love those who were hating him. Made him like unto the Christ Himself, who, while we were still his enemies, died for us. This, this, my young friends, is the supreme height to which you must ascend in this work of preparation for a life of usefulness and service.

For such a work, for such a mission, you have an open and inviting field. No class of young people in all the world has such opportunities for usefulness and service as are yours. The fields are ripe unto the harvest, and the people with open arms are ready to receive you. And if in the spirit of Jesus Christ you go out with a love for the common people, not to have them serve you but to help and serve them, they will hear you gladly and in due time all the honor you deserve and more will come to you.

Again, remember that the constant test of your fitness to go out as a representative of this institution will not be the course from which you graduated, or what you know, or think you know, but what you really are and what you really do. This is the supreme test, and I pray God, you will more than measure up to it.

In addition to what I have already said on this line, let me emphasize this: In doing well the work that is before you mere intellectual ability will not answer. Brilliancy, unsanctified and unconsecrated to the highest possibilities of life, fails and dies as it deserves by the sharpness of its own blade. Something must be done. Something wrought out by sweat, by tears, by blood, by life itself. Some-

thing that will challenge the consideration of mankind everywhere.

As you go forward let me inspire you to be and to do your best, by reminding you that a cloud of witnesses surrounds you. I have often thought of that beautiful picture given us by the Apostle Paul. Sometimes I think Paul himself must have been in the very heat of battle, when, by inspiration, he caught the picture of a cloud of heavenly witnesses looking on with intense interest, watching, pleading, as the battle is fought and the victory is won. A cloud of witnesses, my young friends, surrounds you. It may be that some look on with a critical eye, and you ought rather to be thankful for that and certainly not to be discouraged, because even they ought to inspire you not to run as laggards, but to run as one who has laid down his weights to win the victory and take the crown. But in this cloud of witnesses there are friends, earnest, sincere friends, who have helped you. Friends who desire you to be all that God has in His great heart for you; friends not only in the North, but in the South. These watch you, these follow you with their prayers, and with their best wishes, and weep when you fail and shout when you win. But in addition to these the Master Himself stands by your side to

help you in every moment of discouragement, to strengthen you in every moment of weakness, and it is He who by His own life, His unselfish example for the uplift of others, should cheer you to be and to do your best.

And, finally, remember you are the picked men and women of the race, because of the company which you have here enjoyed and the preparation which you have here received. You are verily the disciples, the chosen few, called into this higher sphere of privilege, of duty, and withal, of opportunity. And the words of my text are singularly appropriate—"But it shall not be so among you; but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant." It will not be so among you, you who have accepted My call and have entered this higher life; you who have espoused My cause, and upon whom My Spirit has fallen; you who have been under My instruction for these years; you upon whom the success of My mission very largely depends; you who are to be My representatives among men—"It shall not be so among you; but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister, and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant." Do this and the

problem within your own life, which, after all, is the most difficult, will be solved and solved correctly. Do this and the problems around and about us will be solved and solved righteously. Do this and the clouds about us will burst into a sunlight of joy; the poor and the weak will lift up their heads and rejoice; the cold and passionless life of the Church will spring into warmth and action, and Christ Jesus be enthroned in the hearts of men. Amen.

III.

CHRIST STILLING THE TEMPEST.

"Master, carest Thou not that we perish?"—MARK IV. 38.

ALL day long in the towns and villages around the sea, the Great Preacher broke the bread of life to the hungry multitudes who followed Him. They were as sheep without a shepherd, wandering lonely, heartsick, and weary. They heard of this Man, a strange and wonderful Teacher, and they came to Him seeking relief from their sorrows and bodily diseases, and when He saw them, He had compassion on them—compassion, what a world of meaning this one word conveys—pity, sympathy, interest, and fellow-feeling. The disciples, seeing their haggard faces, unable to see the depth of their heart poverty and sorrow, would turn them away, but Jesus had compassion upon them. No wonder these common people heard Him gladly.

The scene here before us is unique. They have followed Him over hill and plain until now He is

on the very banks of the sea. How they press upon Him, eager to see Him, to catch every word that fell from His blessed lips. They are complements to each other—Jesus and this multitude—the one is anxious to hear and live, the other is anxious to preach and save. What an earnest, hungry company they were! I would like to preach to such a crowd as that. Hundreds of them have been listening all day, and they never weary. They press upon each other, tip-toeing and peering over each other's shoulders just to get a glance at His countenance, to hear His gracious, matchless words. And He preaches gloriously—not philosophy or science, but the Gospel of peace, of salvation, of good will toward men. So anxious are they to hear Him, to see Him, that they crowd upon Him, and now He stands on the very edge of the sea. To make His position tenable, He gets into a boat, and with the boat as His pulpit, the shore as His church, and the multitudes as His congregation, He continues to tell them of God's love for them, to be in Himself the express image of the Father's goodness and to show to them the mother heart of God.

It is now evening. The sunset glow covers the bosom of the little lake with a golden hue, and twilight fades away into the coming darkness. The

audience is dismissed and sent away. Never have people and preacher parted so reluctantly as they. The disciples, with the Master, got into the ship to cross over on the other side, when He, the Lord of heaven and earth, wearied and tired from continuous service, lies down in the hinder part of the ship, and falls to sleep. I think this is one of the most beautiful and pathetic incidents in all Bible history. Jesus asleep! What a picture! Many a time, when tired and almost exhausted, I reverently turn and look down into the face of the sleeping Christ and remember that He became our High Priest, taking upon Him our infirmities in order that He might enter fully into the sympathies of every tired, weary, and heart-sick soul in all the earth. Truly, as some one has said, "He is the God-man who stands equal with God on the high level of Deity, and equal with man on the low level of humanity."

It is a typical, Oriental evening, and the little boat glided smoothly over the waters, with scarcely a ripple to disturb the surface. But this little sea, nestled here between the mountains, with the swift waters of the Jordan running through it, is, I am told, a deceitful stream. One moment it is calm, and the next moment, influenced by the river run-

ning through its midst, it is turbulent. The cold air from the mountains, and the warm air from the surface, sometimes suddenly mix, and in a moment a wind storm of gigantic proportions is upon you. Such an experience they had that night, and the peaceful lake was suddenly transformed into a roaring sea. The disciples soon became anxious, but amid all their growing fears, kept their oars in their hands. Tossed and driven from place to place, unable sometimes to move a single inch, they nevertheless kept the oars in their hands and pulled until every muscle of their bodies was strained to its utmost capacity. I suppose sometimes they thought they would give it up, for the storm was now at its very height, and the wind rose like the sound of distant thunder. In the very midst of their imminent danger, when all hope seemed to have vanished, and a cloud of despair was gathering upon them, some one, I think, said, "Do n't you know the Master is on board? Let us tell Him of our danger. He has never forsaken us. Let us call upon Him." And they awoke Him and earnestly they prayed, "Master, carest Thou not that we perish?" And waking from His slumber, He arose and stepped out upon the deck, lifted His hand, and in the midst of the roaring winds and the mad dashing

of the waves, he said, "Peace be still," and the prince of the power of the air skulked away, the waves behaved themselves, and there was a great calm. Ashamed of their lack of faith, and startled by this wonderful exhibition of the Master's power over the secret forces of nature, they exclaimed as with one man's voice, "What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?"

I am glad that those other little ships were there sailing in the same waters, having the same dreadful experience as the ship with the Master and His disciples, and at last, relieved from all danger and fear, they enjoyed all the privileges that came to the Master and His friends.

Sometimes I think men do not always give Christianity credit for what it has done for them. They launch their little craft on the waters calmed and subdued by the principles of Christianity, living under its banner sustained and supported by the atmosphere which it creates, but they seem to be unconscious of it. Once I heard a celebrated agnostic speak on freedom to man, woman, and child. He was a brilliant rhetorician, an eloquent orator, a master of good idiomatic English. Sorry I can not say so much for his logic. And as he rounded out his eloquent periods on liberty to man, woman,

and child, I felt like rising in my seat and interrupting him in the midst of his discourse and saying, "Sir, where are those countries that teach the principles of liberty and freedom, and make it possible alike for man, woman and child to enjoy them? Are they lands ruled and dominated by the principles of Christ, and His followers, or are they lands created out of the wild vagaries of agnosticism? Where did you get those ideas—are they not the teachings of the Gospel? Are you not yourself a product not of a heathen, but of a Christian land? Do n't you see you are in one of those little ships, sailing on a sea whose waves once rent and torn by internal moral upheavings, stirred and lashed by angry boisterous winds are now calm and serene as a summer's day? Look about you. Behold the handiwork wrought out by Christian faith. See what Christianity has done for the ennobling of man, and the emancipation of woman from the degradation into which the nations who did not know God had dragged her. Surely there is a great calm, and is not the Christ the one who hath stilled the tempest?"

Turning again to the narrative, what practical lessons are suggested here? In the first place, we see that God helps those who help themselves. This

is true of races as well as individuals. These disciples kept their oars in their hands—not one moment did they relax. Amid increasing difficulties and dangers they kept their oars in their hands, and battled bravely against the turbulent and tempestuous sea. When all their strength was exhausted, and when everything that thought and ingenuity could suggest had been done, weary and worn and faint, they turned to the sleeping Christ with a prayer as direct as their work had been constant, "Master, carest Thou not that we perish?" and in a moment he arose, spoke the word of peace, and the sea was calm, and here, as elsewhere, man's extremity was found to be God's opportunity. My brethren, here is the great law that underlies all successful efforts, both in secular and spiritual matters. God helps those and those only who help themselves.

It is singular that none of God's created beings try to fight against this law but man. The beasts of the forests, the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea have all learned that eternal vigilance is the price of liberty, and that if life is sustained, they must be up and at it. Man only, of all created beings, too often tries to find a new way, but as often fails. What would have been the result if these

disciples after the first effort had become discouraged, and dropped their oars? Saved they might have been, but the strength that comes from self-effort and self-reliance so essential to the development of character, would not have come to them. How many a Church is to-day growing weaker, losing its hold upon the community in which it is planted, because amid some sudden tempest, the members, with only a spasmodic effort to better their condition, have hastily put down their oars. This is true also of individuals, who, because difficulties confront them, and clouds sometimes hang over them, give up, put down their oars, and are swallowed in the sea, and are no more. Whatever, my friends, be our work, in whatever field we may be called to labor, whatever the difficulties that may beset us, let us above all things, keep our oars in our hands, and remember always that God helps those who help themselves.

In the second place, we learn here that God always hears His people when they pray. He may not always give us what we ask—He often does not, for what we ask would often do us great harm if He gave it to us, but He always hears us, and that to a burdened soul, is always unspeakable pleasure.

The Psalmist, in his many experiences, voices

our own, when he says, "The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and His ears are open to their cry." He therefore not only hears us, but His eyes are constantly upon us. He knows our troubles, and is acquainted with our griefs, and our condition is fully understood by Him. Again, He not only hears us, but invites us to come unto Him, for He has said, "Come unto Me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest." And never once has a weary, heavy laden soul been turned away without the consciousness that His petition was heard, and the great loving heart of the Christ was in tenderest sympathy for him. What a joy unspeakable to know without doubt or fear, that the Master is always in reach, and that His ears are ever open to the cries of His people, and though He does not always grant us what we ask, He hears us.

"And He gathers the prayers as He stands,
And they change into flowers in His hands,
Into garlands of purple and red;
And beneath the great arch of the portal,
Through the streets of the city immortal
Is wafted the fragrance they shed."

In the third place, He is able to deliver us. This is a great and a glorious truth. Whatever my lot, wherever I am, whatever the difficulties with which

I may be surrounded, whether by day or by night, on land or on sea, among friends or foes, in prosperity or in adversity, He is able to deliver us. Friends are sometimes willing, but have not the power—their arms are too short, their faith too weak, their sympathies too limited.

Once I remember I was under the shadows, and enshrouded in darkness. I was caught like those men, in a sudden and unexpected storm, and the waves rolled high, and the wind blew fierce. Fighting the angry waves until my soul was sick, and my heart faint, I went to a friend and begged him to help me. He listened intently, became greatly interested, but could only give me a word of cheer for the heavy burden and the sorrowful heart. He did everything a friend could possibly do, but all that was much too short of the help I needed. And thankful to him for what he could do, I turned amid the clouds and darkness to Him whose ear is not only always open to the cries of His people, but who is able to deliver them. For our Christ, whose omnipotent power is everywhere manifest, can anywhere and everywhere reach my case and yours, and is able to save to the uttermost. I went to Him and not only did He hear me, but through His omnipotent power He delivered me. Thank God no

tempest-tossed mariner ever called upon Him and failed. He stills the tempest now as then, and makes Himself Master of land and sea. Surely our God is able to deliver us.

Above all things, beloved, let us see to it that Christ is in the ship. There are dangers before us. Unseen rocks and shoals lie around us. Fierce winds and turbulent waves will overtake us, nevertheless, let us keep Christ with us, for we shall need Him—need Him every day and every hour, and having Him on board, let us not fear, for He is God of land and sea. It is said that Cæsar at one time exposed to the dangers of shipwreck, roused the sinking spirits of his crew by crying aloud amidst the din of the waves and splash of the waters to the helmsman of the vessel about ready to desert his charge, "The vessel which carries Cæsar and his fortunes can never sink." A greater than Cæsar, a conqueror of innumerable battles, who owns the seas and the lands, holds the winds in the hollow of His hand, speaks, amid the crash and splash of the waves, and the boisterous fiery winds: "I am on board, trust in me, and all will be well." Amen.

IV.

IT PAYS TO WORK FOR JESUS.

"And Jesus said, Let her alone; she hath done what she could."—MARK XIV, 6, 8.

CHRISTIANITY is life; it is power; it is an active and growing development; it is a work; it is an opportunity. It has its source in Him concerning whom it was said, "He went about doing good." In other words, it is a sort of co-partnership between God and man in which God gives man a prominent place right by His side to help in the uplift and salvation of His fellowmen. Indeed, it is a holy bond, a holy community, reconstituted and reconstructed by the Master, living and breathing His life, imbued and saturated with His Spirit until with heart afire and tongue aglow, the man goes out from the individual to the race, to the nation, to the whole wide world, in order to the coming of the day and the appearing of the hour when every knee shall bow before Him, and every tongue confess Him Lord.

In this relationship in which God calls you and me to labor with Him, there are both general and specific calls for work and service. Specific calls in which God calls a man by name, gives him his work to do, and sends him out to accomplish it with the ever-blessed assurance, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." And also general calls for work and service which are not to be interpreted so much by Divine intervention as rather by some open door of opportunity through which we may enter and serve, which work in itself is just as divine as if God had called us by name and had given us that particular work to do.

And now as to these specific calls in the which, as I said before, God calls a man by name and gives him some particular work to do. For instance, God called Abraham, in the very beginning of the visible Church, to go until He should tell him to stop, and Abraham by his willingness to obey God, purchased for himself the name of the "Father of the faithful." God called Moses to lay aside the prospective crown of the Pharaohs and lead Israel out of Egypt into the land of Canaan, and Moses "choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season," was faithful to his trust until God laid him down with his

own arm and buried him with His own hands. God called David from the sheepfold to the throne; Saul and christened him Paul to become the great apostle to the Gentiles. And so if I would, I might take all the time I am minded to give to this discourse this morning, in simply calling your attention to these specific calls for work and labor, by which God calls a man by name and gives him some particular work to do. But, my Christian friends, the more I study the needs and demands of the Church of to-day, the more I am convinced that we are in danger of neglecting these general calls for work and labor, general calls which are not to be interpreted by some special Divine call as rather by some open door of opportunity, through which we may enter and find glowing fields ripe unto the harvest. And I do not know but that many, if not most, of the greatest benefactions that have come to our race have come, not because men and women have been waiting for some voice out of the skies to call them to duty and service, but because they have been watching, and waiting, and praying for a chance to do good, and when some door of opportunity has been opened, they have entered it and found service, counting it just as Divine as if God had called them by name and had given them that particular work to do.

For instance, who called Wycliffe yonder in England more than five hundred years ago, when civil and religious liberty were in jeopardy? Who called him to fight, and fight until he died, that we might enjoy the religious liberty which we enjoy to-day? Who called him? Who called Savonarola, that old monk, in that wicked city of Florence, more than four hundred years ago, when the Church and the clergy were corrupt, and when no one could be found to stand up for personal and social purity? Who called this old monk to denounce, in uncompromising terms, the sins of the people about him and plead for a life of purity in Church and State? And although they dragged him from his pulpit, burned him at the stake and cast his ashes to the Arno, yet thank God, Savonarola lives to-day more than he lived four hundred years ago. Dead, yet speaketh. Who called him?

Who called Martin Luther, when the Church had again fallen from her high estate, and instead of the old doctrines of conviction and repentance and godly sorrow for sin, men sought to quiet their consciences by the purchase of indulgences? Who called Luther to nail upon the door of the church at Wittenberg his theses, and by his obedience to God the reformation was born in a day? Who called John Wesley, when

the Church had again turned away from the plain, practical teachings of a universal Gospel for all to a limited Gospel for the few? Who called John Wesley to preach a Gospel of free grace for all mankind, and although they shut the doors of every church in England in his face, stood on his father's grave in yonder cemetery and preached until all England heard the glorious news and until in due time it came over to America? Who called him? Who called John Greenleaf Whittier fifty years ago, when our own country was one great auction block, and men sold their brethren as chattels? Who called Whittier to sing the songs of freedom, to sing the songs of freedom until more than half the nation joined him in the harsher notes of the drum, the musket, and the cannon, until an oppressed race went free? Did not God call these men, and was not that call just as divine as if God had called them by name, and had given them their work to do?

We have such a study in this morning's lesson. In this instance, the character is a woman. She may not have been invited to this house, but she saw her opportunity, and that to her was just as divine as if God had called her by name and had given her that particular work to do. She knew Jesus. He had been most gracious to her. When all had

maligned and abused her, it was He who said, "Daughter, go in peace and sin no more." She remembered it gratefully, and she comes into this house, wends her way around the table, where the Master is reclining, stood over Him for a moment, uncapped her box of ointment and immediately began to anoint His head. But no sooner had she begun this work of love and mercy than some one began that which it is most easy for any one to do, namely, to find fault, and the word of faultfinding, of censure, of criticism passed around that table, while Mary continued her work of gratitude and love. It would seem that here among the Master's friends, Mary ought to have received better treatment. The least thing they could have said would have been something like this, "Mary, we are so glad you have come to do this work of love for our Master. His friends and His enemies have so often changed places that many a time we did not know which was which. We are so glad you have come." But instead of that they harshly criticised her and found fault with her until I think the burden must have been heavier than she could bear. And amid all this censure and criticism, the Master for a time is silent.

While there are some things that took place

at this table which I confess I do not understand, yet the temporary silence of Jesus is clear to me—I understand that; there is a philosophy in it. It was for Mary's sake. He would not take from her the opportunity of endurance and burden-bearing, nor the strength and development of character that always comes as a result of it—He would wait a while. That is what He did in your case. You remember it. The clouds came, friends deserted you, and as you looked up for a smile from above, the very heavens seemed to be brass, and crying in the darkness, you heard no voice save the echo of your own, and He waited until the burden was heavier, the night was darker, and as gross darkness was gathering about you, He broke its wings by the brightness of His own countenance, and you saw yourself clearer, and you loved Him dearer, and you were made all the stronger for future struggles because you had learned to endure like a good soldier. That is what He did in your case, and that is what He did in Mary's case. He waited until the burden was too heavy to be longer borne, until the heart was sick and faint. It was then, amid the storm of criticism and abuse, the Master said, "Let her alone, she hath done what she could."

Looking around this table, I see things that to

me seem strange, and yet perhaps they are not so strange after all, for are they not the common occurrences of every-day life? One of these things I see here which appears to me rather strange, is this: The guilty man, in order to hide his guilt, is often the first to find fault with some one else; for paradoxical as it may seem, nine times out of ten, the man who lives in a glass house throws stones at his neighbor's window-panes, in order to save his own. Nine times out of ten, the man who has just reason to fear detection, starts the mob after his neighbor in order to save himself. That was the case around this table, for was it not Judas, Judas, who, if he did not already have the money in his pocket, had that which was worse, the thought in his heart for the betrayal of his Master? And yet this man was the first one to say, "What is she doing here? This ointment ought to have been sold and given to the poor." And they murmured against her.

Another thing which I see just as paradoxical is this, that often the man whose only claim to public attention is his narrow-mindedness, begins to find fault, to criticise other men of bigger thought, of bigger brain, of bigger heart, from whom we should expect better things, fall right in behind the little man and help him in his criticisms, his faultfind-

ings, and his slander. That was the case around this table, for when Judas, the smallest man in the company, found fault, the others apparently, without thinking, fell right in line and joined in with him, and they murmured against her. I can think of nothing so painful as to see a community, a Church, a State, a great nation, led by some little narrow-minded, self-conceited man, whose only recommendation to public notice is his narrow-mindedness, to see such a man lead and other men of stronger character, from whom we had learned to expect better things, fall right in without even stopping to ask questions, or to find the direction of truth. How refreshing it is to see a man of unselfish devotion to the truth, of sturdy manhood, of heroic mold, refuse to follow the crowd, and amid abuse and slander, stand up for the right! Every man who makes such a stand, becomes a partner of Jesus Christ, and a factor in the uplift and salvation of mankind, and lends a helping hand to the world's suffering poor.

Now, the Mary in my text is a representative of that earnest, vigorous, aggressive element of the Church, who does not wait for a heavenly vision, but finds one through open doors of opportunity, who believes in the divine call of work nearest at

hand rather than waiting for work that is far away, who believes in standing by that work though it means criticism and hardships and abuse, who is dedicated to the magnificent service of working for God and humanity. Let me repeat it, for upon this thought the whole discourse depends—the Mary in my text is a representative of that earnest, vigorous, aggressive element of the Church, who with supreme courage and fidelity to the truth, stands for the right, without evasion or compromise, and to all those who may be here this morning, who, in your home, your Church, your business, or your social life, have encountered criticisms when you have been trying to stand up for the right, and to do what your hands found to do, to all such I bring you this message of cheer and hope—that it is worth while to work for God, that it pays to work for Jesus, and it pays not simply because heaven is before us, and there cometh a rest to the people of God; but it pays even now while the burden is upon the shoulder, the pang or sorrow within the heart. Now in the very midst of criticisms and fault-findings it pays to work for Jesus, for the Master cometh some time; when, like Mary, we are beset upon every side, when the burden seems too heavy, and the heart too faint, the

Master puts under us His great loving arms and lifts us up above the storms of criticisms, in an atmosphere that is purer, and sweeter, and gives us a glimpse of the better land, even a taste of the fruit of the heavenly kingdom.

And now briefly let me indicate some reasons why it pays to work for Jesus: In the first place, it pays to work for Jesus because of the heavenly approbation it begets. Men too often walk with their heads down, and only look up to the skies when the thunder roars, or the lightning flashes. We give great attention to what our friends and our neighbors think of us, and are too often indifferent as to what God thinks of us. I have no word of criticism for the man or woman who is concerned as to what those who know him best think of him. Indeed, I have little hope for the man whose heart is so callous, and who is so peculiarly constituted, that he pays no attention whatever to what his friends or his neighbors think of him. I have little hope for such a man; but, my friends, is it not true that in our desire for social preferment we are giving too much attention to what our friends think of us, and less attention to what God may think of us?

If on any given day in this great republic of ours, we could have the men and women, who have sworn

allegiance to Jesus Christ, look up to Him for guidance and leadership, and then act with due respect to what God would think of us, our liquor problem, and our *labor* problem, and other great problems that attach themselves to our national life, would be solved justly and righteously. Standing for the right often means opposition, abuse, and slander, but after all, is it not worth while? Is it not the fact that God is on our side, giving us full compensation, and are we not in the majority when He is with us? I bring you this assurance, ye men of God, that in whatever field you labor, where amid difficulties you stand for the right, God is with you. Ye men who are in high political places, contending a battle for civic rights and municipal righteousness; ye men who are in the Church contending against penuriousness, narrow-mindedness; ye men and women who are on the firing line of missions, contending against the powers of darkness, I bring you this assurance, that God is with you, and if you will stand for the right, He will support you; and though friends of your youth, and members of your own family fail you, God will send you a word of cheer from the skies, for it pays to work for Jesus because of the heavenly approbation it begets.

In the second place it pays to work for Jesus

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because of the happiness it brings and the satisfaction it gives. How the world has been seeking for happiness, and deceiving itself, has not found it! I have had great sympathy with those master thinkers of the past, who, outside of revelation, were trying to find the highest good, the basis of real permanent happiness. Socrates searched for it, but did not find it, although he was not very far from it, when one morning he startled the philosophers in Athens by saying, "The greatest study of mankind is man." Aristotle, who immediately followed him, tried through a series of subtle reasoning, but he did not find it. And Plato, perhaps the greatest mind in the heathen world, when he had searched through all the philosophical systems of his predecessors, and when he himself had given days and months to find it, finally threw up his hands in despair and cried, "O, that some God-man would come to teach us the way." Thank God that God-man has come in the person of Christ Jesus our Lord, and He gives us the recipe for real genuine happiness, a recipe which is so simple that I am afraid its simplicity has not checked us in our wild mad search for something great and profound. The Master says: "It is more blessed to give than to receive." That is the key to the whole situation. If you would

be happy, make others happy. If there is darkness in your own room, arise and touch the lattice window of another darkened room, and as you bring light and joy to that heart, light and joy will come to yours. Ah, that is the secret. Let us go out into this kind of work, not helping those who need us merely, but those who need us most, and we shall find joy springing up in our own hearts, joy that abideth forever.

Go out then, my friend, and serve not the Master, though He needeth your service, but serve His unfortunate poor, some one who has fallen by the wayside and needs your help. Go and help him and speak a kind word to him. Take hold of the hand of that young woman, once the leader in social life in her community, but who in an unfortunate moment fell, and society, with one hand, opened the door for her betrayer, took him in, and with the other hand shut the door against her, and keeps her out. Go to her and give her a chance, and like Mary Magdalene she may yet be of some service to God and the Church. Do this kind of work and you will have joys that spring up from the eternal springs of God in your heart. It pays to work for Jesus because of the satisfaction it gives and the happiness it brings.

In the third place, it pays to work for Jesus because of the success it achieves. Now, everything that men calls success is not success. It is an old adage, but a true one, "Everything that glitters is not gold," and is it not here we make some of our greatest mistakes? Do we not find ourselves like little children running over the field amid the roses and the blossoms, trying to catch the butterfly because its wings are beautiful, forgetting that the butterfly liveth but for a day? And have there not been many men who, anxious to reach a place where the world could see them and applaud them, sometimes reached the goal of their ambition, but when the critical moment came because they had not builded firmly, down came the structure and everything was a miserable failure? Perhaps no where in the field of human endeavor is this spirit found to excel so much as upon the battlefield. It is here that men have fought, not so much for truth and righteousness, but to receive the applause of their countrymen. We have a sad instance in our own nation, for have not the moral effects of the Spanish-American war been almost effaced by quarrels as to whether the victory was of Schley's or of Sampson's? I say, nowhere has the spirit predominated more than on the battlefield.

Take for instance, Napoleon—Napoleon, who, as Phillips aptly said, "made his way to empire over broken oaths and a sea of blood"—Napoleon, who, in order to become the czar of all Europe, piled upon either side of his path, in his great retreat from Moscow, the best blood of Europe, like so many cords of wood; yet this man, because he was seeking for honor and not for service, with all his wonderful personality, though with one word or lift of the finger, he could send the imperial guard into the very jaws of death, yet this man died on the Isle of St. Helena, a beggar, an exile. Was this life a success? Nay, nay, a thousand times nay.

Take Hannibal, the dusky chieftain of antiquity. Standing there in Northern Africa by the side of his dying father, he promised that when he grew to manhood he would avenge the wrongs which the Romans had inflicted upon the Carthaginians; and growing up to manhood and nurturing all this malice and enmity in his heart, he gathered the largest army Northern Africa ever saw, crossed the Mediterranean, marched through Spain, through France until he encountered the snow-capped Alps, and turning to his generals he bade them go, but for the first time they turned upon him and said, "General, we can not cross these moun-

tains." But the enthusiastic chieftain said, "I will, follow me." And leading his army he accomplished one of the most wonderful feats of history, and won many victories. But when the fortunes of war changed and victory was turned into defeat, his character was not able to stand the test, and putting his own sword to his side he fell upon it, took his own life and filled a suicide's grave. And is it not a queer coincidence of history that, while Hannibal thus died by his own hands, Scipio Africanus, who had been his strongest antagonist, lay dying in far-away exile? Were these lives a success? Nay, nay, nay, a thousand times nay.

Turning away from the battle-field, where men win great victories and receive applause from their fellows, I call up a little incident that took place when I was a boy preacher some eighteen years ago in the city of New Orleans. I can never forget the little church, my first appointment, of only nine members; and although the Church has given me a larger field since then, yet I can never think that my work was ever more important than it was in that little church of nine members. Among them was a dear old soul of ante-bellum days; we called her "Mother Sarah." She had a queer and unique history—born in Virginia, sold a slave into Georgia, then into Alabama, finally into

Louisiana, sold away from her kindred and friends until at this time she did not know that there was a drop of blood in her veins akin to that in the veins of any other person in all the world. She did not know a letter in the book, but she had much of the letter of the Spirit. She knew Jesus, and I remember that some of the best hours I ever spent were simply listening to the experiences and hearty amens of this blessed old saint. Many a morning she used to come to the parsonage before we had arisen—the little parsonage of three rooms—and knock on the door, with a little piece of meat, a potato, or a few grains of meal and flour for the pastor. And many a time, as I took it, I felt like saying, "Mother Sarah, you need it more than I do, you had better keep it for yourself." But thinking that I might hurt the feelings of one of God's saints, I always took it with, "Thank you and God bless you."

One beautiful Sabbath morning, when the sun was shining brightly, and the birds were singing sweetly, and the flowers blooming beautifully, as one might expect in the spring time in that far away Southern city, a young man nervously knocked at the little parsonage door and said: "Mother Sarah is very sick. She thinks she will not live long and wants to see you." I hastily adjusted my toilet, walked rapidly

down the narrow street, and turned up the narrow lane to the little cabin where she lived. It was a one-room cabin—the parlor, the kitchen, the bedroom, the dining-room—one room, that was all. There were no carpets on the floor, no costly pictures on the walls, nothing there to attract the attention except the soot from the old sooty chimney that had painted them black. There she lay upon a bed of straw, lay as quietly as a general with his accouterments around him, waiting for an honorable discharge from the field of battle. As I stepped toward the bed she knew my walk, opened her eyes and extended her emaciated hands to greet me. Before I could say a word, her parched lips began to move, and unable to hear her distinctly, I leaned forward to catch her words, and she feebly said: "I know it is almost church time and I do n't want to detain you, but this morning as I feel that I have n't many hours to stay here, I wanted to tell you that I have been serving Jesus for seventy-two years, and during all that time He has never forsaken me, and I know He will not forsake me now. I have had my trials and my difficulties, sometimes I have been lonely and almost discouraged, but He came just when I wanted Him, took away all my fears and spoke a word of peace to my soul, and

now as I am getting down to the river, I rejoice to say that I am almost home; I soon will be there, I 'm climbing up Zion's Hill."

This was my first experience as a pastor beside the couch of a dying saint. I scarcely knew what to say. I knew I could pray, and I knelt down at her bedside to pray, and when I had said "Amen," she again took me by the hand and said: "I hear the little bell ringing. It is time for service. I may never hear it again. Do not let me detain you. Go on and preach the Gospel, and if you never see me any more tell the Church that I am almost home, I soon will be there, I 'm climbing up Zion's hill." Somehow that morning I delivered my message with unusual freedom, for had I not been inspired with the dying words of that old saint? And just as I sat down the same young man walked down the aisle of the little church to the altar and beckoned to me. I arose and met him, and he said, "Mother Sarah has just passed away, and the last words we caught from her quivering lips were these, 'I am almost home. I soon will be there. I 'm climbing up Zion's hill.' "

Thank God, that life was a success, and many a time since, when in my own Christian life, trials have been great, burdens heavy, criticism severe,

and the heart sick and faint, the Master has come as He did in Mary's case, with a word of comfort and cheer, and His loving arms have been placed under me and He has lifted me up—up above the storms of criticism, fear, and doubt; up near the hills of God, and lifting my eyes toward the gates of pearl, methinks sometimes I have seen that dear old saint standing in the gates of the city, shouting back the song of victory, "I fought a good fight, I kept the faith. . . . Be thou faithful unto death, and thou shalt have a crown of life." It pays to work for Jesus because of the success it achieves.

Last, but not least, it pays to work for Jesus because of the glory and honor and exaltation which will come when life's weary, fretful, feverish journey is ended. It pays to work for Jesus, for just as soon as I lay down the cross I will take up the crown. Just as soon as I close my eyes on this side of the river, the Son of Righteousness, with healing in His wings, will arise and I shall be with Him and shall see Him as He is. And what a joy that will be, to be with Him, the source of all goodness, the fountain of all life, the very essence of love itself! The problems I can not understand now will then be solved. How God's people sometimes forgetting their allegiance to the King, are found fight-

ing in the camps of His enemies. How the wicked seem to flourish and the righteous walk in the darkness and shadows. All these problems which I can not understand now, will then be solved. For now I see through a glass darkly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know even as I am known, and the clouds shall disappear, and the harsh words shall be no more, and sadness and sorrow shall flee away, and He shall wipe all tears from His servants' eyes—Mary's and mine, and yours, forever and forever. Amen.

V.

LOVEST THOU ME MORE THAN THESE?

"So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me? He saith unto Him, Yea, Lord; Thou knowest that I love Thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me? Peter was grieved because He said unto him the third time, Lovest thou Me? And he said unto Him, Lord, Thou knowest all things; Thou knowest that I love Thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed My sheep."—JOHN XXI, 15, 16, 17.

THE greatest possible surprise that could have come to the disciples of our Lord was to see Him getting ready to leave them, without having established a temporal kingdom upon the earth. It was this for which they had prayed; it was this for which they had hoped; and this they had momen-

tarily expected. What an interesting study it is to see these men watching Him as eagerly as the multitudes watched Him, to see if the time had really come when He was going to take His throne and assume temporal power! They were honest men, and they were patriots. They wanted to hold the reins of the government of their own people in their own hands and bring back once more the glorious days of David and Solomon when Israel held an enviable place among the nations of the world. At one time, expectancy ran so high that they began to scold among themselves as to who should be the greatest in His kingdom, and although the Master said unto them, "My kingdom is not of this world," yet somehow they continued to hope for the coming of a temporal kingdom, and to enjoy once more such national prosperity as came to Israel in the days of David and Solomon.

When the terrible shadows of Calvary had come upon them, they were for the moment discouraged, but no sooner had the risen Lord appeared before them, than they began to hope once more that verily the coming of the kingdom was at hand. And again and again during those days fraught with so much interest between the resurrection and the ascension, did they eagerly look after and expect the coming

of the kingdom. But again and again they were disappointed. And as the Master meets them on the Mount of Olivet for the last time, they themselves imagined that something was going to take place, and as if to make a last request, they stepped forward and said, "Master, wilt Thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" And it was then that He said unto them, "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons which the Father hath put in His own power. But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

During one of these moments, when they were sad and dejected, because they could not understand how the Master so mysteriously disappeared from among them, they talked among themselves about the probabilities of the coming of the kingdom, and as to what all those strange things meant. In our study for this morning we find them in such a condition. Evidently they had talked the matter all over, and had concluded that all was lost, and that after all, they had made a mistake. And I imagine one of them said, "Don't you know that three years ago, when we were busy in our work as fishermen,

our Master, who has taken such a strange form and appearance now, and concerning whom there has been such a strange and wonderful history, do n't you remember that He, walking by the side of the sea, said, 'Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men,' and we forthwith left our nets and gladly followed Him? But now since that time, strange things have taken place. We thought verily that He was the fulfillment of the prophecy of our coming King and Lord, but somehow we can not understand these strange things that have taken place. May be, after all, we had just as well go back to the business in which we were engaged when He first found us." And Simon Peter, the impetuous, impulsive Peter, said, "I go a-fishing." In other words, I go back to my business, and they said unto him, "We also go with you." How easy it is when one man backslides for another to follow after him. And they went, and that night they caught nothing, and that is what a backslider always gets for his pains—nothing, literally nothing.

When the morning was come, after a night of weariness and toil, and what an anxious night it must have been for these old fishermen, who knew every spot of this lake, as well as the oldest inhabitant of this town knows every street and crossroad,

for these men who were adepts in their business, to fish all night and catch nothing! And when the morning came, after such a night of weariness, toil, and withal of anxiety, just as the sun was creeping through the mist on the bosom of the sea, they espied a stranger walking on the bank, and somehow, although they did not know Him, they became suddenly interested in Him, and unconsciously, it may be, they paddled their boats so that as they drifted, they drifted nearer the stranger, as if by some strange affinity they were thus drawn toward Him. And He was interested in them, for just as soon as the boats got into speaking distance, the stranger said, "Children, have you any meat"—in other words, My friends, have you caught anything? And they said, "No," and that No was full of the heart pangs of anxiety and worry. How beautiful and tender are these words of the Master to His erring disciples. I am afraid if you and I had come suddenly upon some one who had professed great faith in the Church, and had seen him in such a backslidden condition, I am afraid you and I would have said, "O yes, you backslider, we have found you; I never believed much in you anyhow; I always thought you were a false pretender;" but the Master, with the tenderness and sweetness

of that mother love which He came to exemplify, said, "Children, have you caught anything?" And without stopping to scold them one word, He said as tenderly and sweetly, "Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find."

Without stopping to say, "Sir, we have been casting on all sides of the ship all night, and have caught nothing, and what is the use of now throwing our nets on the right side?" No, they did not stop to question Him—there was something in the stranger that more than interested them, and they, in their anxiety, were perfectly willing to obey Him, and they cast on the other side, and scarcely had the net touched the water, before the fishes began to jump, and they found that they had a net more than full, and it was then that John, the beloved disciple, whispered to Peter and said, "It is the Lord;" and Peter, with the same impetuous impulsiveness that always characterized him, girt his fisher's coat about him, and cast himself into the sea, that he might quickly reach the Lord. And the other disciples came in a little ship, paddling as it were with one hand; and dragging the net with the fishes in the other, they came to the shore, and pulled in the net and found they had one hundred and fifty and three fishes, and

there, to their utter astonishment and surprise, a breakfast had been prepared.

I do not know what the Master said to His disciples during this meal. I have ofttimes wished I might have been there to have heard that conversation, don't you? It must have been beautifully sacred, so much so, that the inspired writer for a while hides it from us. It may be the Master talked with them tenderly about the work they were to do, and in some way got them prepared for the arduous duties and difficulties that were before them—for the suffering and trials and persecution that they were to endure for His sake. I do not know what that conversation was—I have often wished I did.

But when they had dined, when the breakfast was over, when the general conversation had ended, the Master turns to Simon Peter and said, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me more than these?" I can imagine Peter answering, "Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee," and Jesus said unto him, "As an evidence of this love, feed my lambs." And He must have waited for a moment until Peter, who had often spoken too hastily, had had some time to think, thoroughly to digest what he said, and again the second time he said, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me?" And for the first time, I have no

doubt, Peter began to say to himself, "Is it that the Lord is giving me the chance twice, thrice to acknowledge Him, when I thrice denied Him?" And a bit of grief and sorrow must have crept into his heart, but he is still Peter, still trusting in himself, still leaning upon the consciousness of his own rectitude, Pentecost had not come to change him, and he answered as before, "Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee;" and the Master said unto him, "As an evidence of your love, Feed my sheep." And He waited again, until it seems to me that all the disciples were listening to the conversation, for was the Master not talking to them as well as He was talking to Peter? And now, when he has had time to think it over, and to have the whole matter clearly before him, the Master once more says, the third time, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me?" and Peter was grieved because He said unto him the third time, "Lovest thou Me," and yet he saw through his grief his own weakness; and so he falls back, not upon himself, but upon the Omnipotence of God, and says, "Lord, Thou knowest all things. I do not any more trust myself, I have been trusting myself for all these years, and have found that I am not as strong as I had supposed I was. Lord, Thou knowest all things; give me strength and give

me grace that I may be true; Thou knowest that I love Thee." Jesus said unto him, "Manifest it by feeding My sheep."

Now, returning to this initial question, what was the intent and purpose of this conversation between Peter and the Master? In other words, what did He mean when He asked Peter the question, "Lovest thou Me more than these?" The verbal construction, as found here both in the original and in the King James Version, is such that the meaning of the question is not clearly manifest. I think the fact that the Master uses a word for love, higher and stronger in its significance than the word which Peter used, is not pertinent as to the meaning of the question propounded, for in the third putting of the question, the Master, in order to accommodate Himself to Peter's thinking, and to Peter's estimate, accepted Peter's word for love. We must therefore, it seems to me, look elsewhere for our interpretation.

I think if you will notice the construction as we have it here, three interpretations are at least possible. First, Simon Peter, lovest thou Me more than thou, Peter, lovest these disciples? This is a possible interpretation, but as there is nothing in the text or in the context that would support this

interpretation, I think we may lay it aside without further discussion. The next is more probable, namely, Simon Peter, lovest thou Me more than these disciples love Me? If there is not something here in the text or in the context to support this interpretation, there is much in Peter's previous history, for Peter had more than once compared his devotion to the Master with the devotion of the other disciples, and always in his favor. And it is not improbable, by any means, that the Master would, here in the presence of Peter and the other disciples, recall to his mind his assumption of his fidelity to Him in order, first, that He might bring to Peter's remembrance, his denial and his weakness in connection therewith. But this interpretation, to my mind, does not adequately fit the case, and while I am aware that in rejecting this interpretation, I am taking a view directly opposite, even contradictory to the general view, yet I am not able to reconcile all the conditions here with such an interpretation. I do not accept it, because, in the first place, Peter did not know the minds of the other disciples, and could not answer for them, and I do not believe the Master would ask Peter or any of us, a question which it is impossible for us to answer.

In the second place, such an interpretation would have been directly opposed to the previous teaching of the Master. He had again and again taught the disciples the necessity of studying one's self, of looking into one's conscience, of finding the beam in one's own eye, before they could point out the little insignificant mote in their brother's eye, and I do not believe the Master meant to turn Peter and the other disciples to a discussion as to which one of them loved Him most, or which one of them was most loyal to Him, for had they not all backslidden? If Peter had denied Him, had they not all forsook Him and fled? And what could possibly have been the lesson which he meant to have taught Peter and all of them by such an interpretation as this?

Then, again, I do not accept this interpretation, because Peter himself had tried to get rid of personal and individual responsibility when the Master had asked him a question upon one occasion as to "Whom do men say that I am?" And Peter answered, "Some say that Thou art Elias, some say Thou art Moses, some say Thou art one of the prophets." But that did not satisfy the Master, and again He asked Peter, "Whom say ye that I am?" And it was then that Peter fell back, not upon the devotion of others, or the conception that others

had of the Christ, but He fell back upon his own personal experience, and exclaimed, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." And the Master immediately responded, "Thou art Peter. Upon this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

What, then, is the meaning of this question? "Simon, lovest thou Me more than thou lovest these disciples?" no; "Simon, lovest thou Me more than these disciples love Me?" no; well then, what? Let us see. Three years ago these men were fishermen—that was their business. Jesus walking by the side of the sea, called them to be fishers of men—to follow Him—and they did. But during those strange and mysterious days after the resurrection, when they did not—they could not—comprehend what had fully taken place, these men went back to their business of fishermen, and it was upon this morning that the Master again called them back from an all-night's fishing, when they caught nothing, back to the fold and to the work to which He had called them—not temporarily, but for all the days of their lives. This is the circumstance, and the scene is here fresh before us.

As we look around us here, the interpretation forces itself upon us, and we are clear

that the disciples never for a moment doubted the full strength of the Master's inquiry. Ah! now we have it—"Simon, lovest thou Me more than these?"—these what? Ah! here they are, right here before us upon the banks of the sea. Here are the nets, here are these fishing smacks, here is this business. "Simon, lovest thou Me more than these?" These nets, these fishing smacks, this business? Don't you remember that three years ago I called you to leave this business to be fishers of men, and how is it that you have turned away to this business again? If you love Me more than these—these nets, these fishing smacks, this business—then forsake it now and forever, feed My lambs, and feed My sheep, for this henceforth now and forever is to be your business, and your business alone.

This is it. This was their stumbling-block, this the occasion of their backsliding. And have not others called to this blessed work been tempted to go back to their old business? Beloved, we are come here to-day for this beautiful and tender service of consecrating these young men to the Christian ministry. I do not know what temptations any of them or any of you may have had, or are still having. I do not know what it is that may be an

impediment to keep you back from doing your best —from giving yourself thoroughly and unreservedly to a deep, full, and an abiding consecration to God and His work, but if there be anything that would detract from your fullest service to this blessed work of feeding the lambs and feeding the sheep, the Master comes now and places His hand tenderly upon you and upon me, and whispers in our hearts, "Lovest thou Me more than these?" May God give us, every one of us, those of us who have been in the service for years, and to these young men who come now for this blessed consecration, give unto them and to every one of us, strength—not our own, but strength that cometh from Him, to whom we have given our lives, to say as Peter said, "Lord, Thou knowest all things; Thou knowest that I love Thee." And may our consecration be as full and as perfect and thorough as was Peter's when he made the third and last answer.

And he kept his word. There were greater dangers and difficulties ahead than there were behind him. Fears and doubts and misunderstandings were the only things that had previously been in his way, but now, in the blessed work of feeding the lambs and feeding the sheep, he must endure persecution

—persecution without and persecution within—he must be misunderstood by his own brethren, and in the fiery chariots of a desperate and persistent persecution, he must go forward in the work of his life's consecration, feeding the lambs and feeding the sheep. They tell us a beautiful pathetic story: the legend tells us that he suffered crucifixion himself, and that when they would crucify him face upward as the Master was crucified, he begged that his face might be turned downward, that he was unworthy to die as his Master had died. And the impetuous, impulsive Peter, became the steady, strong, earnest, constant, eloquent defender of the faith. It was Pentecost that made him so—it was the baptism of the Holy Spirit that gave him strength, and in our weakness, my brethren, in our temptations, and in our desires sometimes to forsake the work to which God has called us, and to which we have consecrated ourselves, the Holy Ghost is the help which the Christ leaves with us, for He says, "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." Let us therefore, in our weakness, turn to Him, and He will give us strength for every

emergency and grace for every hour of doubt and fear.

PRAYER.

Master, we love Thee. We are truly devoted to the work to which Thou hast called us, and we pray that if in our weakness, with the temptations of the world about us, we should be disposed to go back to the secular work in which we were engaged when we saw and heard the heavenly vision, we pray Thee to give us the presence of the Holy Spirit that He may lead us and bring unto our remembrance all things which Thou hast said unto us; and thine be the glory forever. Amen.

VI.

HOW TO REACH THE MASSES.

"And when Elisha was come into the house, behold, the child was dead and laid upon his bed. He went in, therefore, and shut the door upon them twain, and prayed unto the Lord. And he went up, and lay upon the child, and put his mouth upon his mouth, and his eyes upon his eyes, and his hands upon his hands; and he stretched himself upon the child; and the flesh of the child waxed warm. Then he returned and walked in the house to and fro; and went up, and stretched himself upon him; and the child sneezed seven times, and the child opened his eyes. And he called Gehazi and said, Call this Shunammite. So he called her. And when she was come in unto him, he said, Take up thy son."—2 KINGS IV. 32-36.

I HEARD many a sensational sermon, when I was a boy on a sugar farm in Louisiana, from this text. People came for miles around to hear a man preach about a dead child who sneezed seven times, or the dead boy who came to life by sneezing, and similar

subjects. One thing that centered in all these discourses was the greatness and power of God, for it was upon this theme that the old preachers, illiterate as they were, mainly dwelt. And was not that sufficient compensation for what seemed to be merely sensational?

I invite you to lay aside what may be considered curious and sensational in the text, and let us attend to a careful and devout study of this incident, for I believe in addition to the greatness and power of God, as here exemplified in the prophet—and we can have no greater lesson that that—there are some other lessons which we may learn, which, like Elisha, will give us power to uplift and save men. And I think that in a peculiar sense this incident will indicate to you, young people, who are here preparing to be helpful and useful in life, ways and methods which may help in bringing to life many a dead soul, dead in trespasses and in sin.

The story is a familiar one. This Shunammite woman, who had shown many kindnesses to God's servant Elisha, was given, as an earnest desire of her heart, a son. Naturally enough, he was the star and idol of the family. When he had grown to be quite a lad, he went out, evidently on a hot summer's day in the harvest field with his father, and

after a while complained of a severe and sudden pain in the head, which, in all probability, was a sunstroke. His father, not thinking that anything serious had happened to his son, sends him home to his mother. She is greatly alarmed, and with tender affection takes him upon her bosom and does everything she possibly can do for him, but at noon the child, who had been so miraculously given them, died. It does not strain our imagination to see how this mother must have been broken-hearted over the sudden death of her only son, given her as the result of her kindness to the man of God and her earnest and sincere prayer. One would naturally think that, common to all instincts of humanity, and especially as the result of the temperament so peculiar to the East, this mother would have wept long and loud in the anguish of her despair, but it was not so with this good woman. There was no wailing and mourning, and the news, sad as it was, she did not even tell to her husband. She is a heroine, and with a true mother's heart she bears her great burden in silence, and speaks only to God. Unmoved by the weakness of the civilization in which she lives, she was a mother and had a mother's heart, and for her

"Earth held no symbol, had no living sign
To image forth the mother's deathless love;
And so the tender care the righteous prove,
Beneath the ever-watching Eye divine,
Was given as type to show how pure a shrine
The mother's heart was hallow'd from above;
And how her mortal hopes must intertwine
With hopes immortal; and she may not move
From this high station which her Savior seal'd
When in maternal arms He lay reveal'd."

In this hour of sadness and sorrow she knows where to turn. She does not hesitate for a moment. She starts at once for the man of God, and after four or five hours along the dusty road of Samaria she finds him. Elisha sees her coming and knows at once that something unusual has taken place. Accordingly he sends His servant to meet her, and to ask her what the trouble is, but with keen insight into human nature, she does not tell to Gehazi, Elisha's servant, her trouble, and she was right. Gehazi, like many a servant, was officious, and undertook to interpret his master's mind, and when somehow he conceived the idea that his master was troubled with her, and she fell at Elisha's feet, he attempted to take her away.

Elisha hears her story with breathless interest, and at once orders Gehazi to gird up his loins, take

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his staff, go without stopping to salute any one on the way, and lay the staff upon the face of the child, with the assurance that the child would revive. Somehow the mother had no faith in this procedure, and instead of returning with Gehazi, as Elisha supposed, she tarries with him with the declaration, "As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee." In the meantime, Gehazi strictly obeyed Elisha's command, went to the house, laid his staff upon the child, but there was neither voice nor hearing, and Gehazi, seeing that he had utterly failed, hurriedly brought back the tidings to Elisha. The prophet of the Lord now comes himself, falls down in agonizing prayer before God, stretches himself upon the child, mouth to mouth, hands to hands, eye to eye, and the flesh of the child waxed warm, and the child revived and was given back to its mother.

May we not get some suggestions out of these incidents?—suggestions that may help us in our work of helping and serving men? The first suggestion that occurs to me is this: Parents should not, by indulging their children, expose them to dangers. It was most natural for this child to desire to go into the harvest field with his father, but it was a great mistake that both father and mother

should have permitted him to go and thus expose him, at such a tender age, to the dangers and perils of the intense heat, so extraordinarily severe in this country at harvest time. From the whole story it would seem that the father was going about his work as usual, unmindful of the son until the little fellow cried out, "My head, my head." Indeed, even then the father did not become alarmed, but simply sent him to his mother in order that she might relieve a temporary injury. Is it not too true that many a young man and many a young woman, because parents have permitted them, have gone into temptations and environments where they have gotten their death stroke, and from which they have not recovered? There are pitfalls and temptations all about us, and we are morally guilty to allow our children to come within the influence of these dangers and perils, and then when some moral blow has struck them that has ended in their moral death, see our error when it is too late. God has given us our children to lighten and brighten our homes, but with the joy that has come to us we should nevertheless regard the care of them as a great moral obligation, both to them and to God Himself.

Another lesson that suggests itself here is this, namely; that we can not save men by proxy. God

has given each one of us our work to do, and even Elisha, the great prophet of Israel, was mistaken when he sent Gehazi to do the work which God had commissioned him to do. He gave to Elisha, I submit, the prophet's staff, but the prophet's staff in the hand of an unconsecrated man was nothing more than a dead stick, and a dead stick can not bring life to a dead soul. From every possible point at which we study Gehazi, he was not in sympathy with the Shunammite and her trouble, if indeed he was with Elisha his master. His whole manner reveals his coldness, his passionless indifference in the presence of the weeping mother, and on his way to revive her child. It seems to me that when Gehazi placed the staff upon the face of the child, and saw that it had no effect, he must, in his own mind, have criticised Elisha for sending him to do a work in which he himself had no faith. It is bad enough in the first place to send a proxy, but it is infinitely worse when the proxy has no faith nor sympathy in the work which he is appointed to perform. While I do not believe there is anything in this narrative to lead us to conclude that this was by any means a mere physical performance, and that Gehazi failed simply because he had no faith in his work, yet I think it is nevertheless true—true

in this case as it is true in everything—that we can not do our work well unless we have faith in it. The main point, however, is that we can not save men by proxy. We can not delegate the work that God has given us to some one else. To each one of us God has given his work, and with this commission He has given us strength to perform it, and we can not successfully transfer our responsibilities to a second party. We can not save men by proxy.

The prophet of God at once sees his mistake, and taking the staff from the hand of Gehazi, he goes forward to the performance of his duty. He walks up the stairway, shuts the door, and prays—prays to God for help and victory in this hour of greatest need. If Elisha, God's prophet, commissioned by Him as His representative, needed first of all before he entered into a great contest, to pray, how much do we need it. Blessed is the man who, whatever the work he begins, turns first to God in prayer for direction, for power, for victory. And Elisha prays and God hears him. But there is here, as always, a personal, individual element, and Elisha must do his part. And thank God he does not shirk from it.

I have no reason to think that God commanded him to take this method of bringing the dead

child to life. I think he at once saw that the situation demanded heroic measures, and he fearlessly and courageously accepted this method as the one best suited for this case. He throws himself upon the dead child, hands to hands, eyes to eyes, nose to nose, mouth to mouth. Do you shudder, my young friends, when I tell you that Elisha with his own mouth touched the mouth of the dead child, and with his own hands touched the hands of the dead child? This is just exactly what he did, and the result was just what he expected. The child's flesh waxed warm, waxed warm not because of animal magnetism, for while I repeat it, there must be a sympathetic interest on the part of the human agent, there is no reason why this miracle should be degraded to the level of animal magnetism. The child, however, by the first contact was not fully alive, and Elisha walked up and down the room, praying earnestly to God for help, for victory, for life, and he again threw himself upon the child, face to face, mouth to mouth. His own large heart of faith and trust in God beat alongside of the heart of the little boy, and the child revived, and the child was alive.

Here, then, my young friends, is our important lesson for the morning, and one which I desire to

emphasize. You are God's servants. You have had, many of you, a personal call to be co-workers with Him, and you have had special preparation in order to fit you for His work. Like Elisha, you have been tarrying at Mount Carmel for power, for strength, for usefulness, for efficiency. God now gives you these weapons, and adds to them love, love for God, and love for your fellowman. Into the field now ready unto the harvest, among the wounded, the bruised, the dying, the dead, God sends you, and He has promised to be with you in every trying hour.

We hear very much said in our day about how to reach the masses, how to save the unsaved, how to lift up the fallen, how to reach the unreached. Do we not get our lesson here? Is not the way clear? Is not the method distinct? How shall we reach the masses? Reach them as Jesus reached them; reach them by our love, by our compassion. Reach them not by talking at them, but by going among them, coming in direct contact with them, touching them with our own lives, with our faith, with our love, and the doing the very work that He did, concerning whom the only criticism they could make was that He ate with publicans and sinners. We are to reach the masses then by going after

them, by getting down among them, not to become a part of their sins and crimes, but to put ourselves among them and under them, and by the grace of God to lift them up to a higher and better life.

There is something repulsive about a dead body, even though it be a member of one's own family, but Elisha did not stop at this, he wanted to save that child, he wanted that child restored to its mother for usefulness and service, to bring back to her joy and peace. And the prophet for the moment forgot about the repulsiveness of a dead body, and threw his life upon the life of that dead child and brought it back again. In the same way is there not something repulsive about ignorance and sin, and men and women who live in crime, who are dead in trespasses and sin? Do we not often make a mistake by sending somebody else to them as Elisha did? Do we not sometimes, because of the unpleasant task, shirk responsibility and put into the hands of others that which God has commanded us to do?

My young friends, if we should go out in the name of the Master, forgetting ourselves and remembering only that we ourselves were once as low, as unpromising as many of those about us, we should through the power of God bring back many

a boy and many a girl from death unto life, and restore them to their parents for lives of usefulness and service. I beseech you this morning, because of what God has done for you, because of the high commission to which He has called you, because of the preparation you have received, because you have been tarrying with God and have felt His own power, and yourselves are the results of His mercy and His goodness, I beeseech you in the name of the Christ whom you serve, and whose you are, to go to men, ignorant men, downtrodden men, and put your heart to their heart, and your mouth to their mouth, and breathe into their nostrils the breath of life, of spiritual life, of higher ideals, and lift them up out of death into life, and into the marvelous light of the Gospel of the Son of God. This is your field, and many a poor mother with a wayward, dead son, is appealing to you this morning to go out and help them, and the great institution that has done so much for your education asks you nothing in return for what has been done for you save that you go out with equal enthusiasm, as possessed by those who helped you, to the poorest of the poor, the humblest of the humble, to get down among them, to touch them, to put your life into their life, and by the grace of God to bring forward

as thorough a resurrection from the sin of death and ignorance as Elisha brought this child from natural and physical death, and may God give us the courage for this stupendous task.

"Stern daughter of the voice of God!
O Duty! if that name thou love,
Who art a light to guide, a rod
To check the erring, and reprove;
Thou who art victory and law
When empty terrors overawe,
Give unto me, made lowly wise,
The spirit of self-sacrifice."

Amen.

VII.

LOVE THY NEIGHBOR AS THYSELF.

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself."—LUKE X, 27.

IS IT not strange that our Lord never related His experiences in the world from which He had come, nor by telling of the beauties of the heavenly city, show that He had just come from the Father? In only two or three instances does He directly refer to heaven. First, in those comforting words to His disciples, in which He tells them of the mansions in His Father's house, and again in that wonderful prayer for His disciples, when He stood within the very shadow of the cross, "And now, Father, glorify Thou Me with Thine own self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was." I have thought sometimes that He might have silenced His many questioners at once by going into an exhaustive description of the mansions of the

heavenly city in order to show them that without doubt He had just come from the Father. But He was too busy for that. He had come with a glorious message of salvation, to seek and to save that which was lost, and had no time to confute His enemies by any description of heaven, viewed either as a place or a condition.

It is amusing to see how the scribes and Pharisees and learned doctors of the law surrounded Him from time to time and propounded to Him set questions, hoping thereby to puzzle Him and discomfit Him. It is equally amusing to see how in every instance, without the least effort, they are worsted and go away sad and dejected. They are nevertheless persistent; they will not down, and they try Him again and again.

In our study for this morning they select a lawyer to question Him. Perhaps this was the best selection they could make, for they tell me that some members of this profession have a way of confusing and covering up the truth rather than bringing it to light. Nevertheless, this lawyer was candid, and in the end I think disappointed those who had selected him as their counsel. He met the issue fairly. That he had some religious convictions stronger and higher than the babblers about

him, is very evident. That in his every-day life he was more practical in obeying and following these convictions, is also evident.

When Jesus Himself turned questioner and practically made him answer His own question, "What shall I do to inherit eternal life," the young lawyer accepted the situation and answered without hesitation, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbor as thyself." "Right thou hast answered," said the Master, "do this, and thou shalt live." But he, willing to justify himself—ah! there is the trouble. In all these matters of man's relation to his God, to his fellowman, and his duty and obligation to his neighbor, he seeks to justify himself when his notions come in contact with the teachings of the Gospel. In other words, he sets up his own code of ethics and morals and attempts to bring the Gospel down to them. This was the difficulty with the young lawyer, and this is the difficulty with many a man to-day. To love God with all his heart, soul, strength, and mind, he could answer readily, "Yes," that he had strictly done from his youth. To love his neighbor as himself, that also he could do—only, who is my neighbor? If he

belongs to my class, to my social position, to my race, very well, I can love him. Love my neighbor as myself, only let me choose him, for much depends on who my neighbor is. That was the difficulty in the young lawyer's mind. Wonder if there are not some people like him even to-day?

Our Lord did not stop to argue with him. The parable does the work. It shows the absurdity of his position, and when, in conclusion, the Master asked, "Which now of these three thinkest thou was neighbor to him who fell among thieves," the young lawyer sees the point at once, and promptly answered, "He that showed mercy on him." I am sorry the conversation ended here. While the scene is not so sad and pathetic as the one which Matthew relates of the young man who inquired the way of eternal life, and when the Master showed him the way, refused to accept it, but it is sad and pathetic enough for this young man, who so readily recognized the truth and admitted it, but who evidently was not strong enough to stem the social tide about him, turned away from Jesus without making a public confession. Somehow, he could not stand the ostracism. His friends had appointed him to confuse and confound the Christ, but the Christ, by a strange revelation of the truth, had confounded

him, but he goes away, and rather than accept the Master's teaching, holds on to his old ideas and loses his opportunity. Is not that the trouble of many a man to-day in dealing with the great moral questions in our country, especially these questions touching the relation of man to his fellowmen?

I want to talk with you this morning, my friends, on "Love thy neighbor as thyself," and to this important truth I invite your careful and prayerful attention. We all like to be classed among those who love God. Here, in our own country at least, we lose no caste distinctions thereby, and undergo no embarrassment. It is popular to love God, and with many that is sufficient. But to love thy neighbor—the man who needs you, the man at your side, made in the image of God, asking for a man's chance in the race of life—the man poor, ignorant, despised, degraded—to love him. Ah, that is another question. My friends may not like it, my associates will criticise it. Their ethics on this question are so different from those taught in the Book, that I will have to break away from them, that will cost me too much, and like the young ruler, many turn away.

Before we go any farther, let us attend to definitions a little. What does it mean, this command-

ment, "Love thy neighbor as thyself?" Many, in company with the lawyer, stumble here and become greatly confused. Who is my neighbor? Is he the man who lives in my immediate neighborhood, who is my social equal, and exchanges gifts with me on Christmas? Turn to the parable and let the parable answer that question. Now, as to love for my neighbor, does it mean that I shall love him with the same devotion and enthusiasm as my best and dearest friends, who, during all my life, have been faithful and true? I think not. There is a distinction here which I think we have full privilege to recognize. For even among Jesus' friends we are told, there was that disciple whom Jesus loved. How shall I love my neighbor? It is simply this, that I shall love him and not hate him, so that I shall be free to help when help is needed, and serve whenever opportunity presents itself. That I shall love him so that I shall be so jealous of his rights and privileges that I shall not abridge them myself, or willingly permit others to do it. In other words, as one has well said, "neither exaggerating his claims beyond our own, nor allowing our own to trample upon his." If definitions can settle things, I think this is a good one.

Of one thing we are sure, there is not much

danger that in some moment of unconscious magnanimity, we should exaggerate his claims beyond our own. The danger line is struck in the latter clause of this definition, viz., in allowing ours to trample upon his. The real thought is to give every man a man's chance to be and to do his best, and then, as an evidence of our sincerity, in every possible way, help him to attain to the highest manhood possible. If he falls down in the attempt, go to him and lift him up, and give him another chance, for is not that what you would desire if you were in his stead? Love him so that you can sincerely wish that he might enjoy every pleasure and privilege that has come to you. This, my young friends, I believe, is the Christ idea of "Love your neighbor as yourself."

I come to you, therefore, this morning, with this Christ ideal of love towards one's fellowman, and beseech you, by the grace of God, to attain unto it. A noted writer said recently, that the ethics and principles of Christianity were too high for the average man to reach, and that we could not measure up to them. I wish we might get out of the little business of apologizing for our weaknesses. We can do valiantly in this moral realm if we will. And remember that the man who begins

to apologize for his weaknesses and shortcomings thereby benumbs his own spiritual hands in beating back the sins that would destroy him and soon becomes a moral wreck, sad, pitiable, hopeless.

When I was a boy, I used to think that that parable was turned down side up. I thought there was some mistake about it, that it ought to be arranged so that the priest should occupy the place given to the Samaritan. And was that simply a childish fancy? I think not. It ought to have been so. How many people who by birth, education, environment, special training, vocation, lead us to expect that in all fundamental questions regarding man's duty to his fellowman, they would take, without compromise or evasion, such a position as the text demands, fail us at the critical moment! They seem to come near enough to see, to look on, and then, with a cold, heartless indifference dodge the issue and, like the priest and the Levite, pass by on the other side.

The keen thrust of the Master at the pitiless indifference of the priesthood was terrific. The scene was on the highway between Jerusalem and Jericho. Here, day by day, the priest passed, in going to and from the temple. And by chance—evidently just from his ministrations in the temple that day; his

hands still perfumed with the incense from the altar, the priest passed that way. What an opportunity to become himself an example of his own teaching, to serve and help man as an evidence of his sincerity in serving God. But he simply "sees" him—that was the badge of his passionless indifference. He saw him. He went just far enough to know it was a man, and stopped just long enough to hear the groans and cries of the unfortunate victim, and just as the poor fellow looked up for a smile or a token of brotherly kindness, the priest would have none of it, and to free himself from further embarrassment, he passed by on the other side. What a commentary on a man who was dealing in holy things—a mediator between God and man!

The thrust was terrific, and the lawyer and his associates must have shuddered.

Now comes the Levite, who follows close by. He ministered to the priest in the temple that day, and his after duties detained him a while, he goes along the same road. Perhaps he would not have seen the man at all, if he had not noticed the priest a little distance before him hold off a moment at the place where he lay. And when he came to the spot, he "looked on him"—mark the difference, the priest simply sees him, the Levite looked on him.

He stopped longer than the priest—just a little longer. I think that Levite had some good intentions. The trouble with him was he lacked the power of the initiative. "Why did not my lord the priest do something for this man? He is better able to help him than I am." He hesitated for a moment, and then it was all settled; his opportunity lost, for he also passed by on the other side. O, how I pity the weak-kneed, the moral coward, who come up to duty's door, sees it opened before him, and simply because some one else did not enter, turns away and loses the opportunity of a life time.

But look at that Samaritan. There is something about him I like. He is plain and unconventional. It is his time now, and he comes by. He hears a groan. It is no time now to ask, "Who is my neighbor?" The distress of a human soul is enough for him. He dismounts at once. It was easier for the others, for they were afoot. This man is ahorse. He dismounts, walks among the rocks and shrubbery until he comes "where he was." He sees him, he looks at him, he goes up to him, but lo, he is a Jew. I wonder will he go back now? The Jews hate the Samaritans, and this man knows it only too well. It may be many a time he had been the instrument of their prejudice

and meanness. Is not that enough excuse for him? No, I think not. All these facts rather help him to see his duty. He sees him, he looks upon him, he goes to him, he has compassion upon him, binds up his wounds, pours oil and wine upon them, puts him on his beast, takes him to an inn, pays the bills, and fearing lest the landlord might not be kind to him, gives him a chance to make his bills as large as he pleased. "Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee." What a different spirit from the men who had enjoyed special privileges as the messengers and servants of God!

My young friends, you who, in the truest sense of the word, are the priests and Levites, who have been chosen as the leaders of your people by virtue of the privileges which you have enjoyed in this institution, I beseech you, in the name of the Christ, whose you are, and whom you serve, go out, not merely to see men and look upon them, but to have compassion upon them, to help them, and to serve them. To find the wounded and dying, the ignorant and degraded, and by your own superior strength, snatch them from the jaws of sin and death, and by the grace of God, bring them back to a life of usefulness and service.

The pre-eminent strength of that Samaritan was the fact that he was bigger than his prejudices. The fact that the wounded man was a Jew, whose nation hated him and his, did not hold him back from doing his duty. He was a man of courage and conviction, able to keep from under the debasing influence of his own shadow, able to look himself and God squarely in the face and march straight up to duty when duty's voice demanded it. For was he not

> "Generous as brave,
> Affection, kindness, the sweet offices
> Of love and duty, were to him as needful
> As his daily bread."

Go out then, beloved, to help men, not merely as a matter of duty, but as a high and blessed privilege. See to it that the spirit of genuine love to God has permeated your very being, that you love Him with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength. For thus loving Him, the Invisible, whom you have not seen, you can then, without extraordinary effort, love your brother whose cries you hear, and whose distress you see. The one great difficulty in not loving our neighbors as ourselves is that we do not love God supremely. Let us make a full surrender of all that is selfish within us, of all that is

selfish and sordid so that with the Apostle Paul we may say, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me."

I can imagine how much harm, absolute and irrevocable, this Samaritan might have done himself, had he allowed these questions of race and race hatred to have held him back from this opportunity of helping this unfortunate man. For the man who wrongs another, either by intentionally neglecting him, or by committing some overt act against him, inflicts a greater injury upon himself than upon him who is the object of his neglect, or the victim of his persecution. Here, then, my young friends, is a law absolute and definite, that helping others we always help ourselves, and wronging another, we always wrong ourselves. Our moral natures are so constituted that we can not, if we would, escape this law.

You will thus perceive that this great commandment, upon which the Master placed such emphasis, must occupy a more prominent place in the ethical and moral teachings of the Church. Our civilization is growing more complex, and as a result your

claims and those of your neighbors are touching and overlapping at many points. To add to these natural difficulties which have arisen, men of different races and nationalities, dissimilar in color, in language, in culture, and lacking in important elements of preparation for the rights and privileges of citizenship, have come into this complex organization. Certain questions as to their rights and privileges, in the body as a whole, or to any part of it, have obtruded themselves, and the whole subject has grown more difficult and vexatious. Amid these conflicting interests, how shall we obtain the basis for legislation that shall be fair, impartial, Christlike? I answer without hesitation —the Gospel. That will do it; nothing else will. A little while ago, a distinguished writer asked me if I would not state to him in as few words as possible, my theory of the solution of the race problem in our country. Without a moment's hesitation, I answered: "Sir, I have no theory," and he, startled by my sudden reply, which, although not intentional, seemed nevertheless abrupt, looked on with amazement. Continuing, I said, "No sir, I have no theory, for is it not a fact our theories have done us more harm than good, and really postponed the day for a better understanding of this question? And is it

not true also that some of our theories in their very essence are but a dodging of the question? No, sir, I have no theory, but I have a common-sense notion. It is the Gospel. Having tried everything else, let us try that. The Gospel of fair play and brotherly love; the Gospel for the North and the Gospel for the South; the Gospel for the black man, the Gospel for the white man; the Gospel at home, the Gospel abroad; the Gospel in Alabama, and the Gospel in Illinois; the Gospel in India, China, Japan, Africa—give men the Gospel everywhere, and in due time we shall solve all the world's moral problems. We will solve the race problem in America, we will adjust on the basis of the Sermon on the Mount the strained relations between labor and capital, and in the name of God and suffering humanity, we will wipe out erelong from the face of this nation, the iniquitous liquor traffic."

Give men the Gospel interpreted, not by the selfishness of the ages, but by the spirit of sacrifice which made Gethsemane and Calvary possible.

A few years ago when I was pastor of the Lloyd Street Church, in Atlanta, Ga., Mr. Stanley delivered his famous lecture there on his trip through Africa and how he found Livingstone. I went down to his private car one day to see him and have

a chat with his native African boy who had accompanied him. Mr. Stanley was not in, but the young man, in broken English, invited me to take a seat. After a few moments' conversation on general matters, I asked him about the life and customs of his people. I saw at once that he did not want to talk on that subject, and in a moment he turned abruptly and asked me why people hated him in this country, called him names as he passed on the street, and sometimes threw stones at him. Before I could answer him, he was telling me that he was a Mohammedan, and that there was no such thing as color prejudice and race hatred in his religion.

I can never forget how that heathen man looked when he said this to me. To say I was embarrassed, is putting it mildly. I replied that everybody everywhere did not have this feeling against him, but somehow that did not satisfy him. I went away feeling that something was wrong and out of joint, and felt like finding fault with somebody, but on reflection, I began to find fault with myself, and said: "Young man, are you sure that in your work as pastor of this Church you are doing everything possible to teach your people to love men, to love all men, without regard to race, or nationality, for is it not true that all the hatred on this

race question is not on one side?" I confess I was not sure that I had done my full duty, and I went back to my study and laid aside a sermon on "The Divinity of Christ" which I had prepared for the coming Sabbath, and I prepared, in its stead, a sermon on "Love your enemies. Bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you." In this way I not only strengthened my own conviction of Gospel truth on this subject, but by the grace of God, tried to impress it upon the hearts and consciences of others.

Here then, my young friends, is the Gospel which you are to live, and the Gospel which you are to teach—the Gospel of love. I would rather you would go away with the diploma of this institution, lacking in a full equipment in mathematics, in the industries, or even in the ability to speak your mother tongue correctly, rather than you should go away lacking in a full equipment of the Gospel of love, and therefore be unable to live it out among your people. For, if you have the spirit of love in your hearts, you will have confidence in men and you will love men—all men, black men, white men, Northern men, Southern men; you will love men.

Do not think that because of your race, people will dislike you and will pass you by. There is

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more real genuine love of man for his fellowmen to-day than ever before in the world's history. Do not be discouraged. Elijah, on Mount Carmel, when he had full confidence in God and man, was a great success, but Elijah under the juniper-tree, when he had lost confidence in man, and almost in himself, was a failure. Learn to treat men generously, even magnanimously. You can afford to be magnanimous. It will never hurt you, it will always help you, and it may help the other man. Do not be suspicious of men, learning always that "love thinketh no evil, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, is not easily provoked."

An incident that I think will aptly illustrate this point came under my immediate notice recently. A colored man, whose constant travel makes it imperative that he secure as much rest as possible, was riding on a Pullman car in the South. As he was adjusting his toilet, a passenger, with ill-will as he thought, purposely and intentionally stepped on his foot and aggravated his offense by heavily pressing on a little tender member, which sometimes, unprovoked, had given him trouble. With intense pain running through his whole body, and smarting under what he considered an insult, he was minded to speak harshly to the man, and tell him that he

had acted unkindly toward him because of the race to which he belonged; but in a moment a better interpretation had possessed him, and politely removing his traveling cap, he said: "I beg your pardon, sir, I did not mean to fall against you in this way. You see the train is running so rapidly that it is difficult to keep on one's feet." The man's hands fell as if he had been struck by electricity, and trembling with deep emotion, he replied: "I beg your pardon, sir, I am afraid it was my fault, not yours." "No, no, I guess not," replied the colored man, "you see the train is running so fast it is difficult to keep from falling against another passenger sometimes," and smiling and bowing he walked back to his seat. The other passengers looked on, some scolded this man for apologizing to a Negro, others were silent, but the man's better nature had been reached, and he maintained that the fault was his, and he was wholly to blame. The incident thus closed in peace. What might have happened was averted. A little magnanimity, a little forbearance, a little common sense did it.

Finally, my young friends, go out not only to live this Gospel of love and teach it, but let it become so much a part of your very being that unconsciously it will shine out of your lives. I have

no special admiration for the man who prides himself merely on his intellectual strength. I rather pity him. Nor have I any admiration for a man who prides himself on his physical prowess. He is more to be pitied. For this reason, I never took special delight in Samson, simply because he was the strongest man, and went about with his strong arm clearing the way before him. One thing, however, that this rough and tumble pugilist did that is worthy of commendation. He had a little tussle with a lion one day, wrenched his jawbone asunder, left him dead, and went on his way. Returning that way, he stopped at the place, saw that the bees had made some honey in the carcass, got his hands full of the honey, and walked down the road smiling. That example, my friends, is worthy of imitation. Get your hands full of honey, do not let the troubles and difficulties and unpleasantnesses of the past give you malice or hatred or envy. Stop at the scenes of these difficulties some day, see that some good has come out of them, that God has made the wrath of man to praise Him. Get your hands full of honey, and your heart full of love, and with charity for all and malice toward none, go forward to work, to uplift, to save. Amen.

VIII.

SEARCHING AFTER GOD.

"Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us."—JOHN XIV, 8.

AMID the gathering clouds of Gethsemane, and the impending shadows of the cross, the Master began to reveal to His disciples something of His real life and mission in the world, of His betrayal, His sufferings, His death, and His resurrection. This news completely dumbfounded them. They could not understand it. How was it possible for him, who was the hope of Israel, in whom all prophecies centered, to die by the hand of the very people He came to save? This they could not understand. To them it was unreasonable and inexplicable.

Unable to comprehend this mystery of the kingdom, they fell from surprise and disappointment into deep sorrow and grief. The Master at once attempts to console and comfort them, and this chapter, in continuation of the conversation begun in the previous chapter, opens with these words,

familiar to us all: "Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." This was the opportunity for Thomas the doubter—and I do not find fault with the sincere doubter, who seeks light. Thomas said, "Lord, we know not whither Thou goest; and how can we know the way?" This was the Master's opportunity to give expression to that statement, which perhaps more than any other, explains His peculiar relation to the salvation of mankind. "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by Me." And then He entered into a discussion of His relation to the Father and the unity of the first and second persons in the Godhead. It was then that Philip abruptly breaks into the discussion, and from the depth of his innermost nature cries out, "Lord, show us the Father and it sufficeth us."

Much must necessarily depend here upon Philip's view point. What was the basis of this request? What did he mean? Was he speaking for himself and that little band of disappointed men

about him? Or was he, in a sort of unconscious way, speaking for all humanity?

I think, perhaps, we may with certainty affirm what Philip did not mean. He did not, in the first place, believe that the Master was speaking to him and his fellow disciples by way of parables. There is nothing here in the text or in the context to give the least suspicion of any such idea. Although the Master had often spoken to them in parables and figurative speech concerning the great truths of the kingdom, yet here in the midst of their sorrow and grief He does not add to their confusion by the use of figurative language. His speech is plain and direct, for did not these very disciples themselves say, "Lo, now speakest Thou plainly, and speakest no proverb," accordingly Philip's request is not based upon such a statement, but was itself plain, direct, and to the point.

Is there any suggestion here, even to the most skeptical, that Philip doubted in any way the divinity of our Lord? I think not. For was not Philip with Him during all those eventful years of His wonderful ministry? Was not Philip with Him when again and again He confounded the Pharisees upon their own ground, so that even they themselves exclaimed, "Never man spake like this man?"

Was not Philip with Him, when, outside the gate of the city, he stopped a funeral procession and called the young man back to life and restored him to his weeping mother? Did he not witness that storm scene on the lake that night, when suddenly the elements broke loose, and when about to be swallowed up by the angry waves, they called, "Master, carest Thou not that we perish?" and rising from His sleep, He blew His breath upon the wind, and it ceased. He touched the waves with His hands, and they subsided. Did not Philip, with others, exclaim, "What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the seas obey Him?" Nay, nay, my friends, Philip did not doubt the divinity of our Lord. There was no question of theology in his mind. It was a prayer. It was a prayer based upon the longing within his heart to see God and to know Him. It was that instinctive idea to know God, to see God, to be like God, an idea imbedded and implanted in the very consciousness of mankind. It was that idea suddenly arising within him demanding satisfaction and explanation, so that he could not but exclaim, "Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us." In other words, Lord show us the Father, and this longing within our hearts will be appeased. Lord, show us the Father,

and having had this instinctive idea implanted within us satisfied, we shall be willing to let you depart. Philip was not speaking for himself and those immediately about him, he was speaking for all men of all ages.

I submit, therefore, this proposition, that all men primarily believe in God; want to see Him, to know Him, and to be like Him. I am aware of the books that have been written, and the orations delivered to put God out of the universe, and while I do not severely criticise any honest doubter, I submit that the men whom we call atheists have had, first of all, to fight against their own subconsciousness when they first attempted to deny the being and presence of a personal God. Here lies the great danger of one's trying to deceive his better self. The human mind is so peculiarly constituted that after constant and continual affirmation, we can make ourselves believe that a falsehood is the truth, and vice versa, that truth is a falsehood.

Two boys went out one day to play. They romped across the fields, plucked the flowers and chased the butterflies over the landscape. They sat down to rest, and got lonesome. It is a dangerous thing for one human being to get lonesome—

it is doubly dangerous for two human beings together to get lonesome. These boys began to think what they might do, and what they might say, and they finally hit upon finding out who could tell the greatest lie. Pity innocent childhood should ever amuse itself in this way. The first boy told his, and the second boy, to outdo him, told his, and in a few moments, after laughing over their folly they separated. They met and told it again and again, and after awhile, when days and weeks had lapsed, the boys met together, and what they knew to have been a falsehood which they themselves originated, they now declared to have been actual facts, and the two friends quarreled and fought, trying to prove to each other that the falsehood which they originated was itself the very truth.

Here lies the danger of one's playing and toying with his better self. In the last analysis we are sometimes like these boys, toying with our better selves, and making ourselves believe in the truth of our own vagaries and false imaginations. I affirm, therefore, that all men primarily believe in God. That there is a somewhat implanted in every human breast, the very voice and breath of God Himself that is a part of us, and has remained with us from the day of man's first existence, when God breathed

in his nostrils the breath of life, and he became a living soul.

This instinctive perception of God is always accompanied with a desire, a longing, to know God and to be like God. Indeed, it is God's legacy of Himself, bequeathed to all men of all nationalities, and of all races. For no one thing is so clear in the life and history of all peoples, than this fact of a fundamental idea of the existence of God, which everywhere pervades their every thought and life. In the very nature of the case, this idea of God is clearer among some peoples than among others, and is it not a fact that wherever idolatry exists that that itself is but a perversion of the instinctive idea of God implanted in every human breast which longs to know God and to see Him?

Let us take two illustrations of this fact. One I take from the most cultured people the world has ever seen. These Greeks were a peculiar people. The training of their minds as well as of their bodies must ever challenge the respect and consideration of mankind. They had developed a language, the most subtle and pliable in all the world. In many respects they were a wonderful people. Before the evil days of the Sophists, they produced truly great men, philosophers, poets, statesmen,

logicians, orators. That triumvirate—Socrates, Aristotle, and Plato—are still in many respects necessary to fundamental and clear reasoning in philosophy. Indeed do they not still dominate it? Sophocles, as poet and dramatist, will measure arms with our Shakespeare. Pericles, as statesman, with our Washington; while Demosthenes will equal, if he does not surpass, Burke and Webster and Phillips. Here is a people that were truly unique. Situated on a little peninsula in Southern Europe, they attracted the attention of all the world. Accordingly, Athens, the capital city of their nation, was the intellectual center of the world, and upon the highways which Rome had built from the four corners of the earth, came the world's great scholars to sit at the feet of the great men of Greece.

As a result of their philosophical systems, these people became very religious. Out of their desires they had created a god for every possible purpose. There were gods of war, and gods of peace; gods of the sea, and gods of the land; gods for plenty, and gods for scarcity—indeed Parnassus tells us that the number of gods in Athens was almost equal to the number of inhabitants, and Herodotus tells us that Athens was but one universal altar, so

numerous were her gods. One day there came walking down the streets of that city, a little hump-shouldered, keen-eyed refugee. He at once attracted attention, for I surmise that no man could see him but that the first question would be, "Who is he?" A British peer, standing on the streets of London one day, was attracted by the presence of a large man with broad forehead and massive head. He asked immediately, "Who is he?" and the reply was, "Daniel Webster, the great American orator." "I am not surprised," replied the peer, "he is such a man as you would pick out in any company."

Here is a man walking the streets of Athens to-day, that was just the opposite in size to Daniel Webster, but his personality is such, nevertheless, that you would pick him out in any company. He at once noticed the statues of these gods around and about him, but his companions who were with him, begged him to keep quiet. I can imagine that they said, "Brother Paul, don't you know the enemies are behind us; they have just driven us away from Thessalonica, and if you speak, they will find out your presence and follow after us." And I imagine that Paul replied, "This is our opportunity, and I must here, as elsewhere, preach

Jesus Christ and Him crucified." And so he talks with them in the academy and in the market-places, and they, willing to hear more of him, called him upon Mars' Hill, made memorable as the battlefield of Greece's intellectual giants.

Paul readily accepts. I can see the great crowd before him. Beyond is a sophist ready to lead him off into some philosophical discussion. There is a follower of Aristotle, who would sustain the teachings of his master. How eager they look and watch for his first words? I wonder what will Paul say? He is equal to the occasion—he rises to speak. He looks about him and sees an altar with this peculiar inscription, "To the Unknown God," and Paul, seeing that these Greeks, after having created every god for every available idea, felt that their real consciousness had not been satisfied by gods which they could make with their own hands, wrote as the last analysis, this inscription, "To the Unknown God." Paul perceiving this, rather than enter into any disputation with them, took them upon their own ground, and said: "Whom therefore you ignorantly worship, Him declare I unto you. God, that made the world and all things therein, seeing that He is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is worshiped

with men's hands, as though He needed anything, seeing He giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; and hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after Him, and find Him, though He be not far from every one of us: for in Him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also His offspring. Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device."

Upon this confession of the altar dedicated to the unknown God, unconsciously set up as an indisputable proof of the kingdom of heaven within them, wrought out of their own consciences, and as the result of the longing in their hearts for God —upon this confession, Paul preached to them Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

Take another illustration. It is from the most religious people in the world's history. Somehow I love the Jew. He has given us the greatest idea of our civilization, namely, the idea of the one God; for it is upon this fundamental idea that the na-

tions who lead in the world's civilization have builded. And let us all remember that it is the gift of the faith and devotion of the Jew. One day Pharaoh attempted to wipe out these people by sending out orders to execute every male child born among them. Instead of taking the life, Pharaoh himself saved life, for into the very palace came a little Hebrew boy, adopted by his own family. The history is too familiar to repeat here. This boy, when he grew to manhood, attempted to solve problems just as Pharaoh had done, and his attempt was as great a failure as was Pharaoh's. He slew an Egyptian for inflicting a wrong upon his brother, but Moses found that you can not solve moral problems by resorting to material resources, and he paid for his rash act by an exile of forty years as a shepherd boy on the bleak hills of Palestine.

There is very much in this man to admire. A college graduate, he was not ashamed to be a tender of sheep, and for forty years he contents himself as a shepherd boy, without, as we know, a word of complaint or faultfinding. And during all these years, he added to his university education the better training of practical life. One day he saw a bush on fire. That was no unusual sight for a shep-

herd to see, but the fact that the bush burned and was not consumed, attracted his attention, and drawing near, a voice out of the midst of the burning bush bade him "go tell Pharaoh to let my people go." And although a mixed multitude went up with him, yet no statesmen in all the world's history ever guided the great affairs of state with more forbearance, wisdom, and unselfish devotion than did he.

One day God called him upon the mountain and detained him for forty days and forty nights, and so close had Moses been to the presence of the mighty God, that when he came down, his face shone like unto the sun, and the people could not look upon him. Again God called him into the mount with Him, and again detained him for forty days and forty nights. How I almost envy Moses of these great privileges. I wish I had been there that I might have heard the voice of Jehovah, and that I might have seen the mountain shake with His mighty presence. It would seem to me that that might have been enough for Moses, do n't you? Called by God out of the midst of the burning bush, favored with God's presence during his visits to Pharaoh, and with a pillar of cloud by day, and a pillar of fire by night, to signify Jehovah's presence,

and twice for forty days and forty nights on the mount alone in God's presence, it seems to me that that ought to have been enough for you, Moses; so many of your fellow travelers in distress and tribulation, have never heard the voice of Jehovah, or felt the mountain quake with His presence.

But somehow, as I look into that face, something strange and unusual attracts me. Surely he can not be dissatisfied, for more than any other man, he has been oftener in the presence of God. I wonder what it is that troubles him? He suddenly turns. He is in the attitude of prayer. He is looking toward the place from which emanates the presence of the Most High. His silver locks of eighty years hang loosely about his shoulders, his eyes startle with emotion, he lifts his brawny arms, and from the depths of his soul exclaims, "I beseech Thee, show me Thy glory." God tells him that no man can see His face and live, and yet Moses, out of his desire, the same that was in Philip's breast to see God and to know Him, once more, in spite of the Almighty's refusal to accede to his wishes, prays, "I beseech Thee, show me Thy glory," and somehow, when a human being gets on fire to see God and to know Him, God finds some way by which he can momentarily satisfy him, and He

hides Moses in the cleft of the rock, and he passes and touches him with His hand, and Moses, beholding the mercy and goodness of God, feels that he has seen God face to face, and goes down from the mountain satisfied.

This is the religious instinct of man, everywhere present, and everywhere exerting itself, even amid the most adverse circumstances. This was the instinct that prompted Philip to say, "Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us," and it was the same instinct that was in the mind of the Psalmist when he said, "I shall be satisfied when I awake with Thy likeness." Thank God for the incarnation of Jesus Christ. He has come to show us the way, and to be not only the express image of the Father, but to show us the Father's love, and the Father's mother heart for the human race.

Some two or three years ago, while our General Committee was in session at Philadelphia, President McKinley sent us an invitation, through Bishop Hurst, to a luncheon and reception at the White House. The Committee accepted the invitation, and as a matter of course I came along with them. Fortunately, my presence at the White House did not excite so much interest as that of my good friend, Mr. Washington. I can never for-

get the evening, when after waiting awhile for the appearance of the Chief Executive, I turned to one of my close personal friends, and calling him by name, said, "This waiting is a little anxious, is n't it? I have met the President before, but I am not sure that he will know me, and I confess, in such a distinguished company as this, not being personally acquainted with most of them, I feel a little anxious, and my anxiety is growing as the moments come and go." My friend expressed the same view.

In a few moments a man walked down the center aisle of one of the corridors. He seemed to be more than six feet in his stockings. Tall, handsome, with epaulets on his shoulders, and stripes down his trousers, he seemed to have been a man of authority. In a moment he lifted his hand and said, "Ladies and gentlemen, come this way. Give me your name and I will introduce you to the President, and the President will introduce you to Mrs. McKinley and the members of his official family." That at once relieved our anxiety, and one by one we were introduced by name. Passing out at the other end, I said to my friend, "That gives me a picture. We shall not be anxious and fearful when we get up to the Gates of Pearl to enter the City, for is it not true that some one knows us? Jesus

Christ is acquainted with us, and we shall not have to wait and have moments of anxiety in a strange company. He will come down to the gates of the city, He, through whose hands the nails were driven, and the same hands with the sign of the sufferings of the cruel cross, will take us by the hand—He Himself will call us by name, and will introduce us to the Father and the assembled hosts of heaven—surely we shall know Him, we shall see Him, and blessed be God, we shall be satisfied only when we shall awake with His likeness."

Here is another reason for the incarnation of the Christ. For He came not only to teach us the way, but to be Himself the way, and to be the bridge over which the human should walk, and finally lose itself in the Divine. How rapturous were the words of the apostle when he said, "And now beloved, it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is."

PRAYER.

Father, help us not to be careless with this instinct within us which leads us to know Thee and to be like Thee. Thou hast given it us, that wandering away from Thee, we may still be near Thee, if we would consult our better selves. May we, by

close communion, improve upon it day by day, until, growing more and more into the likeness of Thy Son Jesus Christ, we shall finally pass through the gates into the city through Him and by Him to know the Father, and to be like Him, and surely then that will suffice. Amen and Amen.

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